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## THE ELIZABETHAN CONCEPTION OF THE TYRANT<sup>1</sup>

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We'll have thee, as our rarer monsters are,  
Painted upon a pole, and underwrit,  
'Here you may see the tyrant'.

### I

In an age such as the sixteenth century, whose fortunes were so dependent upon the office of kingship, it was natural that the problem of its abuse by a tyrant should be closely scrutinized. Such was the case in Tudor England, where the growth of royal power was paralleled by an increased ethical and literary interest in the moral responsibilities of kings and in the manifold evils which arose when they did not observe them. Works dealing with the virtues of kingship and the vices of tyranny were numerous during the period, partly, no doubt, because they were an indirect means of urging the reigning monarch to live up to the highest ideals of his position. Elizabethans, in particular, could scarcely fail to come into contact with some form of literature which brought to their notice the general nature and particular vices of tyranny, as it was then understood. Treatises like *The Gouvernour* by Sir Thomas Elyot followed the tradition of the 'specula principum', and, by delineating in detail the character and conduct of an ideal prince, made it so much the easier for them to recognize his antithesis in the form of a tyrant. Moral and psychological compendiums like La Primaudaye's *The French Academie*, making as they did a consistent effort to define the relationship of the microcosm, which was man, to the macrocosm, which was the universe, showed them the damage done

<sup>1</sup> This essay is largely based upon material collected for a doctoral dissertation at Yale University, 1940-42, during the tenure of a Commonwealth Fund Fellowship.

to both by vicious princes. In churches throughout England, the Anglican divines preached to them sermons dealing with such vital questions as the obedience due to kings and the attitude to be observed should they descend to tyranny. Chroniclers revealed to them that history was a succession of reigns in which national fortunes rose or fell according to the character of each monarch. They found that Seneca, their favourite classical tragedian and moralist, had written pregnant passages about the theory and practice of wicked kings, and that the infamous Italian, Machiavelli, was reputed to have composed a set of maxims for cunning and ruthless tyrants.<sup>1</sup> In the theatres, for their delight and instruction, the dramatists depicted the rise and fall of evil kings in tragedies and chronicle plays. Such varied tragedies as *Cambises*, *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, *Richard the Third*, *Macbeth*, *Mustapha*, and *Alaham*, whose leading characters are tyrants, confirmed or supplemented what they had heard from the pulpit or read in their studies.

Eminent critics of the day, such as Thomas Nashe and Sir Philip Sidney, studiously informed them that these dramatic presentations of tyranny were ample proof of the moral worth of contemporary plays. And, indeed, the dramatic portrayal of evil kings became a focal point in the defence of plays and playwrights in the latter half of Elizabeth's reign. Nashe defended plays as conducive to virtue and declared that they

shew the ill successe of treason, the fall of hastie climbers, the wretched end of usurpers, the miserie of civill dissention, and how just God is evermore in punishing of murther.<sup>2</sup>

All the themes enumerated here are those which contemporary moralists associate with the rise to power and the abuse of kingship by a usurping ruler.

Sir Philip Sidney goes even further. He considers that tragedy has a high civic purpose: to make kings fear to be tyrants. He refers impressively to

high and excellent tragedie, that openeth the greatest woundes, and sheweth forth the Ulcers that are covered with Tissue, that maketh Kings feare to be Tyrants, and Tyrants to manifest their tyrannical humours . . . that maketh us know, *Qui scaeptra saevus duro imperio regit, Timet timentes, metus in authorem redit.*<sup>3</sup>

To support this belief he relates how a tyrant, Alexander Pheræus, as Plutarch tells us, was moved to tears of repentance by a tragedy. To clinch his argument that poetry instructs better than history or philosophy,

<sup>1</sup> I hope to consider in a separate article the influence of Seneca and Machiavelli on the Elizabethan conception of the tyrant.

<sup>2</sup> *Piers Penilesse His Supplication to the Divell* (*The Works of Thomas Nashe*, ed. R. B. McKerrow, London, 1904, vol. I, p. 213).

<sup>3</sup> *The Defence of Poesie* (*The Complete Works of Sir Philip Sidney*, ed. A. Feuillerat, Cambridge, 1923, vol. III, p. 23).

Sidney declares that certain Greek poets accomplished what even Plato failed to do, namely, to convert a tyrant into a just king:

Certain poets as Simonides and Pindar, had so prevailed with Hiero the first, that of a tyrant they made him a just king; where Plato could do so little with Dionisius, that he himselfe of a philosopher, was made a slave.<sup>1</sup>

Whether practical playwrights were as conscious of their high civic mission as was Sir Philip is debatable, but it cannot be doubted that their depiction of tyrants was profoundly affected by contemporary moral and political theories, and that side by side with the latter it took its place in the extensive gallery of tyrannical portraits laid open to the curious and speculative gaze of the Elizabethan multitude.

## II

The word 'tyrant' had several distinct meanings for Elizabethans. As the varied entries in the Oxford English Dictionary reveal, it could still be used in its morally neutral classical sense of 'absolute ruler'; but it was most frequently employed with the hostile connotation of usurpation, or cruel or unjust rule; so much so, in fact, that by extension it came to be applied to the perpetrator of any remarkable wickedness or excess. Writers on ethics and politics, however, are notably precise in their definitions and distinctions.

Contemporary theorists erect a sharp dichotomy between tyrants who have usurped their thrones and tyrants who have been crowned and anointed as rightful kings in accordance with the principle of strict hereditary succession. Confronted by Calvinist and Roman Catholic challenges, the Anglican Church condemned outright all doctrines of deposition and tyrannicide in cases where an evil king had lawfully succeeded to his throne. Texts from Holy Writ were advanced to prove that tyrants of this kind must be tolerated and that even passive resistance to them was permissible only when their actions were contrary to conscience and the word of God.

These doctrines were given a nation-wide currency by means of the special sermons which Queen Elizabeth ordered to be preached in every church throughout her kingdom. The *Homily against Disobedience and Wilful Rebellion*, prepared by her bishops in 1571, is of salient importance in this connection. It has been authoritatively described as 'the completest expression of what might be called the Tudor theory of the duty of subjects in a commonwealth'.<sup>2</sup> This sermon flatly asserts that lawfully

<sup>1</sup> *The Defence of Poesie (The Complete Works of Sir Philip Sidney)*, ed. A. Feuillerat, Cambridge, 1923, vol. III, p. 33.

<sup>2</sup> J. W. Allen, *A History of Political Thought in the Sixteenth Century*, New York, 1928, p. 131.

succeeded tyrants reign by the will of God, who will defend them against all adversaries:

As in reading of the holy Scriptures we shall find, in very many and almost infinite places as well of the Old Testament as of the New, that kings and princes, as well the evil as the good, do reign by God's ordinance, and that subjects are bounden to obey them . . . that God defendeth them against their enemies, and destroyeth their enemies horribly. . . .<sup>1</sup>

Closely allied to this demand for patient endurance was the belief that an evil king was a scourge with which God punished a sinful people. To punish such a nation, God may even remove a good king and replace him with a tyrant. The homily cited above emphasizes these two arguments and even goes so far as to suggest that Edward VI was divinely removed to make way for the deserved chastisement of Mary's rule:

God, say the holy Scriptures, maketh a wicked man to reign for the sins of the people. Again, God giveth a prince in his anger, meaning an evil one, and taketh away a prince in his displeasure, meaning specially when he taketh away a good prince for the sins of the people, as in our memory he took away our good Josias, King Edward in his young and good years for our wickedness.<sup>2</sup>

Consequently, subjects who sin so heinously as to deserve an evil prince merely augment their wickedness and the displeasure of God if they attempt to contradict His will by deposing their tyrant:

. . . for subjects to deserve through their sins to have an evil prince, and then to rebel against him, were double and treble evil, by provoking God more to plague them. Nay, let us either deserve to have a good prince, or let us patiently suffer and obey such as we deserve.<sup>3</sup>

It must be emphasized, however, that such passive toleration of tyranny was to be accorded only to the evil king who was 'God's anointed' and who had lawfully succeeded to the throne. This condition was fully appreciated by the authors of the *Homily against Disobedience and Wilful Rebellion*, who refer to Saul as a tyrant of this kind, and praise David, because, although he was heir-apparent and favoured by God and the people, he spared Saul when he might easily have slain him:

. . . the Lord keep me, saith David, from doing that thing, and from laying hands upon my lord God's anointed. For who can lay his hand upon the Lord's anointed and be guiltless?<sup>4</sup>

Such, in brief, was one aspect of the orthodox view of tyrannicide, which the censorship of the drama was, no doubt, designed to keep sacrosanct. It is, moreover, a significant fact that no treatise, to the knowledge of the

<sup>1</sup> Church of England, *Certain Sermons or Homilies*, London, 1864, p. 589.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 594-5.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 595.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 602.



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present writer, composed by a Calvinist, Congregationalist or Baptist in England during the reign of Elizabeth, advocates tyrannicide as a remedy for misrule in the case of a lawful king.

How these orthodox ideas influenced the shaping of dramatic themes can be seen most obviously in the instance of *Cambises*,<sup>1</sup> an Elizabethan moral-ity play by Thomas Preston. Cambises is a tyrant, successively guilty of murder, fratricide and incest. At the same time, however, he is a lawful hereditary king; as we are laboriously informed at the outset of the play, he is a monarch who, 'by due inheritance', 'succeeds his kingly seat as due'.<sup>2</sup> Consequently, when the common men, Hob and Nob, suggest that he deserves punishment for the murder of his brother, Ambidexter condemns their temerity as 'treason against the king's grace', and threatens them with the fate of being 'hanged, drawn and quartered'<sup>3</sup>—the customary Elizabethan form of execution for traitors. Discerning Elizabethan spectators would concur with the variable Ambidexter in this situation; however oppressive the rule of Cambises may be, it must be tolerated in the patient hope that God will end it soon. This is precisely what happens. Cambises kills himself by falling upon the point of his sword as he attempts to mount his horse. The divine justice enacted by this apparent accident is given a choric emphasis by the explanation of the First Lord:

A just reward for his misdeeds, the God above hath wrought:  
For certainly the life he led was to be counted nought.<sup>4</sup>

The sudden death of King Cambises by divine intervention, without a subject's raising a hand against him, is the ideal solution to the problem of his tyranny from the point of view of contemporary morality. The same idea is a motivating principle in Fulke Greville's tragedy *Mustapha*. Soliman, a lawful king turned tyrant, orders the execution of his son, Mustapha. Although he is the heir-apparent, Mustapha virtuously rejects all counsels of resistance with the dictum,

God burnes his roddes, but we must suffer all.<sup>5</sup>

He therefore goes passively to his execution; Soliman is a scourge of God, and God alone may end his evil rule.

<sup>1</sup> *Cambises* was entered in the Stationers' Register during the period 1569-70. The text used is that edited by J. S. Farmer, *Tudor Facsimile Texts*, London, 1910.

<sup>2</sup> *Cambises*, p. A2 11.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. E.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. F 3 (a) recto.

<sup>5</sup> *Poems and Dramas of Fulke Greville*, ed. G. Bullough, London, 1939, vol. II, p. 243. The line is part of Greville's revision of his text. Professor Bullough answers the problem of dating Greville's three dramas as follows: *Alaham* 'was written (in my opinion) between 1596 and 1600, before *Antonie and Cleopatra*, but after the first version of *Mustapha*', *ibid.* p. 45.

## III

Though Elizabethans were admonished to endure a tyrant who had succeeded lawfully to his throne, they were counselled not to tolerate any usurper who might seize the crown. Even if such a person ruled well, he was still to be regarded as a tyrant, and could be justly attacked, either openly or secretly. This important doctrine is very clearly expressed in Charron's popular moral treatise, *Of Wisdome*:

The Prince is a tyrant and wicked, either in the entrance, or the execution of his government. If in the entrance, that is to say, that he treacherously invadeth, and by his owne force and powerfull authority gaines the sovereignty without any right, be he otherwise good or evill (for this cause ought he to be accounted a tyrant) without all doubt we ought to resist him either by way of justice, if there be oportunity and place, or by surprise. . . . Neither can it be said to be a resisting of the Prince, either by justice or surprise, since he is neither received nor acknowledged to be a Prince.<sup>1</sup>

The same distinction is patent in the disparaging legalism of Bacon's reference to Richard III: 'Richard the third of that name, King in fact only, but Tyrant both in title and regiment'.<sup>2</sup> Even if the usurping tyrant goes through the ceremonies of coronation and anointing, his claim to the throne is still invalid, and the rightful hereditary heir may summarily dispossess him. This doctrine, a corollary to the one cited above, is elaborated by the supreme apologist of Elizabethan orthodoxy, Richard Hooker. Referring to coronation ceremonies, he writes:

Those public solemnities before specified do but serve for an open testification of the inheritor's right, or belong unto the form of inducting him into possession of that thing he hath a right unto: Therefore in case it doth happen that without right of blood a man in such wise be possessed, all these new elections and investings are utterly void, they make him no indefeasible estate, the inheritor by blood may dispossess him as a usurper.<sup>3</sup>

These ideas are pervasive in Elizabethan literature. Even in the pseudo-Grecian kingdom of *Arcadia* they make their presence felt. Both Musidorus and Pyrocles, respectively, are offered crowns after the death of the tyrants of Phrygia and Pontus, but, significantly, the heroes decline and take the virtuous course of ensuring that dominion is given to close relatives of the dead kings.<sup>4</sup> To the Elizabethan mind, usurpation is a sin, and it is a major factor in the moral system which underlies the chronicle play and the historical tragedy. Shakespeare provides abundant and con-

<sup>1</sup> Pierre Charron, *Of Wisdome*, translated by Sampson Lennard, London, 1612, p. 525. This was the second edition of this treatise.

<sup>2</sup> Francis Bacon, *The Moral and Historical Works of Lord Bacon*, London, 1852, p. 307.

<sup>3</sup> *The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* (The Works of Richard Hooker, Oxford, 1839, vol. II, p. 401).

<sup>4</sup> Sir Philip Sidney, *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, Cambridge, 1912, pp. 201, 204.

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sistent illustration of this fact, which is, indeed, fundamental to his interpretation of history. By contemporary standards, for example, Henry IV is a tyrant in the manner of his entrance to government and Shakespeare accordingly depicts him as haunted by the memory of his sinful deposition of Richard II, the anointed hereditary king:

How I came by the crown, O God forgive.<sup>1</sup>

Even his son, that *speculum principis*, Henry V, recalls his father's usurpation of the throne with pious misgivings before the battle of Agincourt:

Not today, O Lord,  
O, not today, think not upon the fault  
My father made in compassing the crown!<sup>2</sup>

In such passages as these Shakespeare shows himself faithful to ideas already embodied in his first historical tetralogy. To prove to the King of France that Edward of York is a tyrant, Queen Margaret considers it sufficient to brand him as the usurper of King Henry's throne:

To prove him tyrant this reason may suffice,  
That Henry liveth still.<sup>3</sup>

The troubles attendant upon Henry IV's usurpation, though gloriously halted by the brilliant reign of his son, are not finally expiated until the advent of Henry Tudor, Earl of Richmond, who slays 'the usurping boar', Richard III, in single combat, and by marrying the Princess Elizabeth unites at last the Houses of York and Lancaster and brings the long disasters of civil war to an end.

### IV

Such portraits of the ideal prince as Shakespeare's Henry of Richmond form part of a literary tradition which dates from classical and medieval times and engaged such intellects as those of Plato and St. Thomas Aquinas. Both of these writers contrast true kingship with the evils of tyranny. Plato regards the tyrant as a man mentally diseased and therefore incapable of true freedom. St. Thomas goes so far as to justify tyrannicide when it is undertaken by men invested with public authority. In medieval England, John of Salisbury contrasted the virtuous prince with the sinful tyrant. Like later writers, he discerned the origin of tyranny in 'ambition, to wit, the lust for power and glory', and considered it just for public tyrants to be killed.<sup>4</sup> He asserted, moreover, that virtue and good training, not hereditary right, should govern the succession to thrones.

<sup>1</sup> *King Henry the Fourth*, Part 2, IV. v. 218. The Arden Shakespeare is used throughout.

<sup>2</sup> *King Henry the Fifth*, IV. i. 298.

<sup>3</sup> *King Henry the Sixth*, Part 3, III. iii. 71.

<sup>4</sup> *Policratus* (1187), as quoted by L. K. Born in his Introduction to Erasmus's *The Education of a Christian Prince*, New York, 1936, pp. 111-3.

Moralists of the Renaissance contributed to the *specula principum* tradition in accordance with the changed conditions of their day; the doctrinaire princes of Elyot and Machiavelli differ greatly both from one another and from medieval models. The need for national unity and the fear of foreign dominion obliged Protestant Elizabethans, unlike their medieval ancestors and Italian contemporaries, to postulate hereditary right as one of the fundamental conditions of kingship.

Granted this principle, Elizabethans would subscribe to and elaborate the precepts of kingship and the anatomies of tyranny current on the Continent. One of their favourite authors in this vein was Pierre de la Primaudaye, whose lengthy compendium *The French Academie* was published in English in 1586 and again in 1589. True to the literary convention of the *specula*, La Primaudaye sets the godly prince in contrast to the lawless and passion-driven tyrant. Commencing with an abstract definition of tyranny,

But generally we may call that a tyrannie, when the prince accounteth all his will as a just law, and hath no care either of piety, justice, or faith, but doth all things for his owne private profit, revenge or pleasure,

he condemns its vices by presenting them in the form of a continuous comparison with the corresponding virtues of a good king:

And as a good king conformeth himselfe to the lawes of God and nature, so a tyrant treadeth them underfoot . . .

Consequently, the tyrant's behaviour is distinguished from that of a Christian prince by his injustice, his cruelty, his sensuality, and his hatred of good counsel:

. . . the one taketh revenge of public injuries, and pardoneth his owne, the other cruelly revengeth injuries done to himself, and forgiveth those that are offered to others: the one spareth the honor of chaste women, the other triumpheth in their shame: the one taketh pleasure to be freely admonished, and wisely reproveth when he hath done amisse, the other misliketh nothing so much as a grave, free, and vertuous man. . . .

Fear, not love, is the motivating power of the tyrant's rule. Paradoxically, he secures obedience through fear, yet lives himself in continuous fear of his subjects:

. . . the one maketh great account of the love of his people, the other of their feare: the one is never in feare but for his subjects, the other standeth in awe of none more than of them: the one burdeneth his as little as may be, and then upon publicke necessity, the other suppeth up their blood, gnaweth their bones and sucketh the marrow of his subjects, to satisfie his desires. . . .<sup>1</sup>

By thus presenting the tyrant as the antithesis of the godly prince, English and French writers came to regard him as an embodiment of most of the seven deadly sins. He is pre-eminently proud, wrathful, lecherous, and

<sup>1</sup> *The French Academie*, translated from the French by T. B., London, 1589, p. 601.



avaricious. This doctrinaire creation of Renaissance moralists has much in common with the supreme author of evil; and as they emblazon the godly prince as God's vice-regent, they denigrate the mortally sinning tyrant as a human counterpart to Satan himself.

The contrast epitomized by La Primaudaye occurs in almost every serious form of Tudor literature. One of the most popular works of the period, Sir Thomas Elyot's *The Boke named The Gouvernour*—published eight times between 1531 and 1580—is an Aristotelian treatise on kingship and tyranny. Elyot's ideal king possesses the salient virtues of Fortitude, Prudence, Temperance, and Justice, and he governs his own passions as well as his subjects, whereas erring monarchs, like Alexander and Scilla, who fail to observe the virtuous doctrine of the mean in their conduct, live to regret their passion and are punished by God.<sup>1</sup> In a similar vein, the historian Edward Hall dedicates his chronicles to King Edward VI with the assertion that princes derive the most important historical lessons from the contrast between good and evil kings:

... if no man had written the goodnesse of noble Augustus, nor the pitie of merciful Traian, how shoulde their successours have followed their steps in vertue and princely qualities: on the contrarie parte, if the crueltie of Nero, the ungracious life of Caligula had not been put in remembrance, young Princes and fraile gouvournours might likewise have fallen into a like pit, but by redyng their Vices and seyng their mischievous ende, thei be compelled to leave their evill waies and embrace the good qualities of notable princes and prudent gouvournours.<sup>2</sup>

In the romantic labyrinth of *Arcadia* we are confronted by carefully wrought models expressing the same contrast. King Euarchus, for example, is an ideal ruler, whose chief merits are the Aristotelian qualities of 'magnanimitie' and 'justice',<sup>3</sup> whereas shortly afterwards Sidney's heroes encounter the treacherous and dishonourable tyrants of Phrygia and Pontus.<sup>4</sup> So much for the tradition as it appears respectively in the writings of humanist, historian, and courtier. The adherence of the Elizabethan journeyman writer is best exemplified by Nicholas Breton in his book of characters, *The Good and the Badde*, where he describes 'A Worthy King' and 'An Unworthy King'. The worthy king is a 'figure of God, in the nature of government: he is the chiefe of men, and the churches champion, Natures honour, and Earths majesty', but the unworthy king 'knows no God, but makes an idol of Nature, and useth reason but to the ruin of

<sup>1</sup> *The Boke named the Gouvernour*, ed. H. H. S. Croft, 2 vols., London, 1883, vol. II, pp. 4 and 55.

<sup>2</sup> Edward Hall, *The Union of the Two Noble and Illustre Famelies of Lancastre and York*, 1548, p. 1 of unpaginated dedication.

<sup>3</sup> *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, p. 187.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 200-4.

sense. His care is but his will, his pleasure but his ease, his exercise but sin, and his delight but inhuman'.<sup>1</sup>

Elizabethan drama provides sufficient evidence to show that the traditional device of setting king and tyrant into violent contrast found its way into chronicle play and tragedy and that it is utilized in them with a consistency which warrants its being regarded as a definitive dramatic convention. Space does not permit a detailed analysis of the convention in this essay, but certain salient elements can be described.

It is noteworthy that the worst stage tyrants are always presented as usurpers and that the legitimate princes who invariably defeat or supersede them possess the moral virtues of model kings. For example, in *The Misfortunes of Arthur*,<sup>2</sup> Thomas Hughes portrays King Arthur more as a virtuous contrast to the usurping Mordred than as a member of the same tainted dynasty, which strict Senecan convention would require. The theme of usurpation is one of the keynotes of the play and recurs like a leading motif in a symphony. The tyrant Mordred himself acknowledges that a usurper inevitably plunges deeper into crime:

Let him

Usurpe no crowne that likes a guiltless life.<sup>3</sup>

The main purpose of the dumb show before Act Five is to symbolize the victory of legitimacy over unlawful dominion. The stage directions require a gentleman to pass before the audience

bearing, in the one hande, a broken pillar, at the toppe thereof the Crown and Scepter of the vanquished king, both broken asunder, representing the conquest over usurpation.<sup>4</sup>

The victorious Arthur possesses the temperate, 'moderate' courage of the true Aristotelian hero and fortune accordingly favours his cause:

And fortune, pleased with Arthurs moderate feare,  
Returns more full and friendlyer than her woont.<sup>5</sup>

whereas Mordred's desperate fury is described as an extreme emotion, going beyond the mean between cowardice and rashness which constitutes true valour:

O frantike fury, farre from values praise!<sup>6</sup>

King Arthur is the patriarchal monarch who loves the commonwealth,

Thou realme, which aye I reverence as my saint,  
Thou stately Brytaine, th' ancient tipe of Troy,<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Works in Prose and Verse of Nicholas Breton*, Edinburgh, 1879, pp. 5 and 6.

<sup>2</sup> First performed before Queen Elizabeth in February, 1587; probably written in the preceding year. The edition used is that of R. Payne Collier, London, 1828.

<sup>3</sup> *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, I. IV. (p. 24).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 70.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, IV. II. (p. 63).

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, IV. II. (p. 63).

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, III. III. (p. 52).

but Mordred is a vainglorious egotist who wishes to die, like King Priam, in the midst of general ruin:

A solemn pompe, and fit for Mordred's minde  
To be a grave and tombe to all his realme.<sup>1</sup>

Shakespeare makes a significant addition to the dramatic convention of character-contrast in *King Richard the Third*. Like Mordred, Richard III is a usurping tyrant who defends his infamous regime with a beastlike fury against the just claimant to the crown. Shakespeare, however, intensifies his comparison by setting it upon a religious plane. A series of images presents Richard as a soul who has deliberately surrendered himself to the devil. His permanent dedication to evil takes place in *King Henry the Sixth, Part 3*, where he declares his intention

to account the world but hell,<sup>2</sup>

and when, in the same play, he gives up his mind to the devil as a revenge upon heaven for deforming his body:

Then, since the heavens have shaped my body so,  
Let hell make crookt my mind to answer it.<sup>3</sup>

In *King Richard the Third*, like the devil himself, Richard exhibits an impersonal malice towards all men, and by a machine-like efficiency in treachery, perjury, and murder establishes his monstrous rule. Queen Margaret's choric comment on his crimes continues the diabolic motif:

That foul defacer of God's handiwork,  
That excellent grand tyrant of the earth,<sup>4</sup>

and abominates him as a species of satanic agent who buys souls for his master:

Richard yet lives, hell's black intelligencer,  
Only reserv'd their factor, to buy souls  
And send them thither.<sup>5</sup>

In contrast, Shakespeare conceives of Henry of Richmond as virtually an avenging angel, divinely appointed to conquer the forces of evil. This conception may have been suggested by Holinshed's description of him as 'more an angelicall creature than a terrestriall personage'.<sup>6</sup> Whereas

<sup>1</sup> *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, II. iv. (p. 41).

<sup>2</sup> *King Henry the Sixth, Part 3*, III. ii. 169.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, V. vi. 78.

<sup>4</sup> *King Richard the Third*, IV. iv. 51.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, IV. iv. 71.

<sup>6</sup> *Holinshed's Chronicle as used in Shakespeare's Plays*, ed. J. and A. Nicoll, London, 1940, p. 176.

the Ghosts disrupt Richard's mind before Bosworth, they give Richmond assurance of supernatural aid:

God and good angels fight on Richmond's side,<sup>1</sup>

and he himself assures his soldiers that

God and our good cause fight upon our side.<sup>2</sup>

The appeal to God for aid which he makes in his oration before the battle is conspicuously absent from Richard's corresponding harangue to his men, and the implication that Henry's victory is partly due to divine intervention is strengthened by the revelation that Richard's army is thrice the size of Richmond's.<sup>3</sup> The climax of the battle, in which Henry fights and slays the tyrant in single combat, is thus invested with the allegorical significance of a victory of good over evil.

All the major elements of this dramatic convention in their relation to legitimacy, the prosperity of the commonweal, the doctrine of the mean, and supernatural good and evil, are present in *Macbeth*. They are virtually summarized in Act IV, Scene iii, where the prolix dialogue between Malcolm and Macduff, which has annoyed critics, can be explained as an episodic intensification of the convention of character-contrast. Macbeth emerges from the descriptions given during this scene as a monster whose vices prove him to be the worst of tyrants. He is guilty of all the crimes itemized by La Primaudaye in the following passage:

Briefly, a craftie and wicked Monarch will establish a tyranny: a cruel man will make a slaughterhouse of the common-wealth; a whoore-master will make it stewes: a covetous wretch will pull off both hair and skin from his subjects.<sup>4</sup>

In a similar style, Macduff details the sufferings of Macbeth's subjects:

each new morn,  
New widows howl, new orphans cry; new sorrows  
Strike heaven on the face,<sup>5</sup>

and Malcolm describes him as

bloody,  
Luxurious, avaricious, false, deceitful,  
Sudden, malicious, smacking of every sin  
That has a name.<sup>6</sup>

It is seldom noticed that by this testimony Macbeth is convicted of lust, one of the commonest vices of tyrants as described by contemporary moralists. The subsequent discussion of kingly virtues and vices brings

<sup>1</sup> *King Richard the Third*, v. iii. 176.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, v. iii. 241.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, v. iii. 11.

<sup>4</sup> *The French Academie*, p. 585.

<sup>5</sup> *Macbeth*, iv. iii. 4.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, iv. iii. 57.



# THE ELIZABETHAN CONCEPTION OF THE TYRANT 173

Aristotelian criteria to bear upon Macbeth's character. Macduff postulates the doctrine of the mean when he asserts,

Boundless intemperance  
In nature is a tyranny,<sup>1</sup>

and in the same strain Malcolm cites 'the king-becoming graces', specifying by name Aristotle's cardinal virtues of temperance, fortitude and justice:

As justice, verity, temperance, stableness,  
Bounty, perseverance, mercy, lowliness,  
Devotion, patience, courage, fortitude.<sup>2</sup>

He catalogues these virtues in order to represent that he, and, by later inference,<sup>3</sup> Macbeth, do not possess them. Moreover, the identification of Macbeth's tyranny with the rule of hell becomes complete in this scene. Malcolm's expression of doubt in Macduff,

Angels are bright still, though the brightest fell:  
Though all things foul would wear the brows of grace,  
Yet grace must still look so,<sup>4</sup>

is an oblique reference to Macbeth; he too, like Satan, was once numbered among the brightest of a noble hierarchy, and fell likewise because of his ambition. The 'fair is foul, and foul is fair' keynote is re-echoed in the second line quoted; though bereft of grace, like the devil, Macbeth claims royal dominion. Macduff continues this diabolic motif:

Not in the legions  
Of horrid hell can come a devil more damn'd  
In evils to top Macbeth,<sup>5</sup>

and Malcolm reveals the satanic temptations with which Macbeth has tried to trap him in the past; Macduff is not the first to offer help to him for

Devilish Macbeth  
By many of these trains hath sought to win me  
Into his power.<sup>6</sup>

The subsequent allusions to Edward the Confessor are much more than a compliment to James I on his alleged ability to cure scrofula by laying his hands on the afflicted. The description is a continuous presentation of lawful and hereditary kingship as the instrument of the holy supernatural. Whereas Macbeth, the usurping tyrant, wounds the commonwealth, Edward, the legitimate king, cures his subjects of a disease which defies all ordinary medical treatment:

'Tis called the evil:  
A most miraculous work in this good king.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Macbeth*, IV. iii. 66.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, IV. iii. 92.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Macduff's remark, 'These evils thou repeat'st upon thy self Have banished me from Scotland' (IV. iii. 112).

<sup>4</sup> *Macbeth*, IV. iii. 22.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, IV. iii. 55.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, IV. iii. 117.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, IV. iii. 146.

It was a common belief that this miraculous power was hereditary in the anointed kings of England, and it is re-echoed in Malcolm's words,

To the succeeding royalty he leaves  
The healing benediction.<sup>1</sup>

The supernatural healing is thus dependent upon the moral sanctions violated by Macbeth: those of anointed and hereditary kingship. The contrast, moreover, does not end here. King Edward also possesses

a heavenly gift of prophecy.<sup>2</sup>

Macbeth, on the other hand, relies on the witches, agents of the devil, for knowledge of future events. 'Sunday blessings' hang about Edward's throne,

That speak him full of grace,<sup>3</sup>

whereas several passages impress upon us that Macbeth is devoid of the grace of God. He cannot make a Christian man's rejoinder to the prayer of the troubled sleeper after the murder of Duncan, and later admits that his soul belongs to the devil:

mine eternal jewel  
Given to the common enemy of man.<sup>4</sup>

The contrast between the pattern of tyranny and the *speculum principum* is again deliberate and calculated. Malcolm's disquisition on his assumed vices convinces us of Macbeth's monstrous ethical failure as a king; the description of Edward the Confessor makes vividly apparent the supernatural evil of Macbeth's rule. The convention therefore provides a precise and positive set of values which indicate the enormity of tyranny by the continuous device of contrast.

## V

It was a commonplace with Elizabethan moralists that while a tyrant reigned he was never happy. They excelled themselves in enumerating the varied and stringent punishments to which he was subject. Internally, they said, the tyrant is tormented by his conscience and by his painful passions, both of which are part of a divine scheme of retribution. 'The conscience of a wicked man', affirms La Primaudaye, 'is unto him instead of an accuser, a witness, a judge, and a hangman.'<sup>5</sup> This judge who holds session within the microcosm punishes 'by meanes of the affections, which God placed in man to that ende'.<sup>5</sup> During his reign, the tyrant lives in continual fear and misery. Comparing the good with the evil prince, La Primaudaye declares that 'the one rejoiceth in assured rest, the other languisheth in

<sup>1</sup> *Macbeth*, IV. iii. 155.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, IV. iii. 157.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, IV. iii. 159.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, III. i. 67.

<sup>5</sup> *The French Academie*, London, 1589, p. 64.

perpetual feare,<sup>1</sup> and in another passage describes how even those who delight in their tyrannical sway are finally constrained to admit their wretchedness:

And to say truth, tyrannie is such a miserable condition, that even they that practise it and glorie therein, are constrained manie times to confesse with their owne mouth, that no kinde of life is so wretched as theirs.<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, tyrants seldom reign for long and generally die a violent and desperate death. 'The raigne of tyrants', writes La Primaudaye, 'being without measure and reason, and guided onely by violence cannot be of any long continuance. This is what Thales the wise man saide, that there was nothing so strange or rare, as an olde tyrant.'<sup>3</sup> The same moralist expresses the belief that their deaths were usually even more painful than their miserable lives:

For there were few of them that died not a cruell and extraordinarie death; most of them being slaine and murdered: and others persecuted with strange griefes, died like mad and desperate men, through the remembrance of their corrupt life, and of the cruelties they had committed.<sup>4</sup>

Inwardly tormented by passion and the pangs of conscience, outwardly existing in constant fear and misery, and suddenly subject to a violent death, the tyrant must nevertheless expect still heavier punishments hereafter. He is eternally damned. God may, indeed, use a tyrant as a scourge to castigate His wicked peoples, but the tyrant also is evil and will be consigned to the fires of hell. The tyrant Cæsar, Philip Mornay declares, was slain miserably to

shewe unto tyrannes that the highest step of their greatnesse is tyed to a halter, and that they be but God's scourges which he will cast into the fyre when he hath done with them. . . .<sup>5</sup>

The same dire fate is predicted by the famous Elizabethan preacher Henry Smith, who asserts that those magistrates

which use their power against God, which bear the lawes against God's Law, and be enemies to his servants . . . cannot so well be called *gods* as Devils: such *gods* go to Hell.<sup>6</sup>

The terrible fate of tyrants is a pre-eminent example of the computational justice which so many Protestant moralists of the Renaissance believed to operate in human affairs. The punishment of such evil kings illustrated for them the Judaic principle of talio, according to which

<sup>1</sup> *The French Academie*, London, 1594, Part II, p. 327.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 1589, p. 602.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 602.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 602.

<sup>5</sup> *The Trewenesse of the Christian Religion*, tr. Arthur Golding and Sir Philip Sidney, London, 1587, p. 201.

<sup>6</sup> Henry Smith, *Sermons*, London, 1657. These were first published in 1591.

wicked deeds were requited in kind. To these moralists, poetic justice was not a matter of chance but the inevitable and consistent result of the operation of God's will upon the terrestrial stuff of existence. They therefore rejected the classical and medieval conceptions of a blind, fickle, and unpredictable Fortune and endorsed a doctrine of Divine Providence; 'whom the poets call Fortune we know to be God', wrote Raleigh,<sup>1</sup> quoting Melancthon. Their theory in its purest form is defined by Thomas Beard, who refers to God as follows:

And unto him belongeth the direction and principall conduct of humane matters, in such sort that nothing in the world commeth to passe by chance or adventure, but onely and alwaies by the prescription of his will; according to the which he ordereth and disposeth by a strait and direct motion, as well the general as the particular, and that after a strange and admirable order.<sup>2</sup>

The dramatic versions of the tribulations and punishment of tyrants correspond closely to the beliefs outlined above. The stabs of conscience, the ceaseless passion of fear, and the threat of damnation which assail the stage-tyrant during his troubled reign before his customary violent death conform to the pattern of poetic justice laid down by the moralists. Even the diabolical Richard III has a restless and censorious conscience:

My conscience hath a thousand several tongues,  
Any every tongue brings in a several tale,  
And every tale condemns me for a villain.<sup>3</sup>

The final phase of Macbeth's career is a complex revelation of the permutations of the passion of fear characteristic of a tyrant. 'Fear' and 'tyrant', indeed, are the two nouns most frequently used in the last two acts of the play, and often occur in intimate connection. La Primaudaye describes fear-ridden men as being 'frighted with dreams, they tremble at sights and visions, they credite false abusing spirits. . .'.<sup>4</sup> Macbeth exhibits all these perturbations. It is fear which drives him back to the witches and his response to the warning of the First Apparition is symptomatic:

Thou hast harpt my fear aright.<sup>5</sup>

The diabolism of the stage tyrant, like the necromancy of Faustus, is punished by damnation. Macbeth's soul is forfeit to 'the common enemy of man' and the tortures of hell also await Richard III:

Earth gapes, hell burns, fiends roar, saints pray,  
To have him suddenly conveyd from hence.<sup>6</sup>

The doctrine of computative justice illustrated by their doom is nowhere

<sup>1</sup> *The History of the World*, London, 1614, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> *The Theatre of God's Judgements*, London, 1631, p. 3 of the unpaginated preface. The first edition of this work appeared in 1597.

<sup>3</sup> *Richard the Third*, v. iii. 194.

<sup>4</sup> *The French Academie*, 1589, p. 265.

<sup>5</sup> *Macbeth*, iv. i. 74.

<sup>6</sup> *Richard the Third*, iv. v. 75.



better phrased than in Macbeth's broodings over his contemplated crime:

But in these cases  
We still have judgment here: that we but teach  
Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return  
To plague th' inventor; this even-handed justice  
Commends the ingredients of our poisoned chalice  
To our own lips.<sup>1</sup>

The execution of this 'even-handed justice' is especially marked in the case of the usurping tyrants Richard III, Macbeth, and Alaham. All three die unnaturally after suffering mental as well as physical pain. Macbeth and Richard are slaughtered in battle. Alaham is poisoned and tormented by his faithless wife. Where human and divine law do not permit dutiful subjects to visit justice upon the tyrant, as in the case of Cambises, punishment comes by means of a fatal accident, which is, in fact, the contrivance of God. The only fully-drawn stage tyrant who avoids the fate of violent death after committing unnatural crimes is Greville's Soliman, who is likewise a lawful king. In this, as in other questions, Greville's Calvinism is somewhat at variance with the more orthodox moral attitudes of the other dramatists of tyranny. Nevertheless, his additions to *Mustapha* declare that God will treat Soliman as he deserves, and, at the end of the play, in the midst of a disintegrating kingdom, the emperor faces the threat of a hostile mob.

## VI

Despite the manifold penalties to which the crimes of tyranny 'in entrance and execution' were subject, history proved to the Elizabethans that many men had aspired to unlawful dominion and had attempted, sometimes successfully, to seize a royal authority which was not rightfully theirs. They generally explained such actions as the result of the mastering passion of ambition, which, having displaced the virtuous rule of reason in the mind of its victim, corrupted his will and urged him inexorably along the sinful courses which lead to a rebel's execution or a tyrant's doom. La Primaudaye describes ambition as 'a vice of excess', an 'unmeasurable desire to rule', and an 'unreasonable desire to enjoy honors, estates and great places'.<sup>2</sup> The *Homily Against Wilful Rebellion* asserts that ambition and ignorance are the chief causes of rebellion, and defines ambition as a sin against the hierarchical system of order and degree appointed by God on earth:

By ambition I mean the unlawful and restless desire in men to be of higher estate than God hath given or appointed unto them.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Macbeth*, I. vi. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *The French Academie*, 1589, pp. 211-2.

<sup>3</sup> *Certain Sermons or Homilies*, p. 616.

Yet it is noteworthy that the moralists believed that ambition was a vice of great minds only and that its supreme exemplar was Lucifer, who aspired to the place of God. 'It lodgeth only in great mindes', avers Charron, 'even in the Angells themselves.'<sup>1</sup> The *Homily* asserts that the leader of a rebellion is 'the ungracious pattern of Lucifer and Satan', and will share their fate of damnation.<sup>2</sup>

In the mind of the ambitious man, the chief intellectual faculties of the soul, reason and will, are dominated by his passion. False arguments therefore come easily to his mind and he employs casuistry to justify his regal aspirations. He believes that where a kingdom may be gained, righteousness may pardonably be violated. 'But to continue our matter,' writes La Primaudaye, 'if right (say ambitious men) may be violated, it is to be violated for a kingdome.'<sup>3</sup> The employment of the same casuistic argument is also noted by Charron in his anatomy of the passion of ambition: 'Si violendum est jus, regandi (*sic*) causa violendum est, in caeteris pietatem colas'. 'If a man may at any time violate Justice, it must be to gaine a kingdome; in the rest observe justice and pietie.'<sup>4</sup>

The ambitious man not only perverts logic to justify his ends, but also uses unnatural means to attain them. 'To be short', says Charron of the passion of ambition, 'it offereth violence even to the lawes of Nature itselfe. This hath been the cause of so many murders of parents, infants, brothers.'<sup>5</sup> Once ambitious men achieve power, the disease of their passion inevitably makes tyrants of them:

And the more they growe and increase in power and authoritie, the rather are they induced and carried headlong by their affections to commit all kind of injustice, and flatter themselves in furious and frantike actions, that they may come to the end of their infinite platforms, and of that proud and tyrannical glorie, which, contrarie to all dutie they seeke after.<sup>6</sup>

The passion of ambition, like the vice of tyranny, bears its own punishment within itself. Insatiable lust for power and security deprives its victim of all peace and repose. 'Ambition never suffereth those that have once received him as a ghest, to enjoy their present estate quietly, but maketh them alwaies emptie of goods, and full of hope.'<sup>7</sup>

In several particulars, the stage tyrants Mordred, Macbeth, and Alaham

<sup>1</sup> *Of Wisdome*, 1612, p. 81.

<sup>2</sup> *Certain Sermons or Homilies*, p. 616.

<sup>3</sup> *The French Academie*, 1589, p. 217.

<sup>4</sup> *Of Wisdome*, 1612, p. 81. This Latin tag seems to have had a popular currency; Queen Elizabeth writes to Sir Henry Sidney, Governor of Ireland, 'Si violandum jus regnandi causa'. (*The Sayings of Queen Elizabeth*, ed. F. Chamberlin, London, 1923, p. 152.) Her modification is significant; right may only be violated to safeguard lawful title, not to usurp a kingdom.

<sup>5</sup> *Of Wisdome*, 1612, p. 81.

<sup>6</sup> *The French Academie*, 1589, p. 212.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 212.

portray in action the theoretical views of the passion of ambition outlined above. Ambition is their chief motive; they deceive themselves with false arguments, and the realization of their hopes brings not joy but disillusionment. With a notable degree of self-awareness, Mordred confesses his hatred of subordination and his overpowering passion for rule:

I loath, I yrke, I doe detest a head  
B't nature, be it reason, be it pride,  
I love to rule! my minde, nor with, nor by,  
Nor after any claimes, but chief and first!<sup>1</sup>

Less obviously, but not less surely, Macbeth and Alaham exhibit the same fatal craving for eminence and honours. Denying the hereditary right of his weak but elder brother, Alaham utilizes the casuistry of 'might is right' to justify his aspirations:

Who measure hopes, and losses by the truth  
Goes ever naked in this world of might:  
Mine be the Crowne: my brothers be the right,<sup>2</sup>

and Mordred actually embroiders the argument of 'Si violendum est jus, regandi causa violendum est' when he endorses the wrong which wins a crown:

And since a wrong must be, then it excels  
When 'tis to gaine a crowne.<sup>3</sup>

All three tyrants sin against the law of nature upheld by the moralists; Macbeth murders his lawful king: Mordred fights against his father: Alaham kills both his brother and his father. Similarly, all three find only pain and discontent when they have usurped their crowns. To Alaham, his kingdom becomes a place of torment:

Is this Ormus? Or is Ormus my hell,  
Where only Furies and not Men do dwell?<sup>4</sup>

and Macbeth degenerates from vainglory to cynicism; his title becomes mouth-honour and life signifies nothing. Yet both Macbeth and Mordred possess the fatal greatness of the ambitious man and in death they are titanic. Macbeth scorns suicide and fights on savagely yet heroically, even though Birnam wood has come to Dunsinane and Macduff is his predestined slayer. The description of Mordred's death is framed in epic terms:

There Mordred fell, but like a prince he fell;  
And as a braunch of great Pendragons grafte  
His life breaths out: his eyes forsake the sunne,  
And fatal cloudes inferre a lasting clips.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, I. iv. (p. 24).

<sup>2</sup> *Poems and Dramas of Fulke Greville*, vol. II, pp. 147, l. 199-201.

<sup>3</sup> *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, I. iv. (p. 24).

<sup>4</sup> *Poems and Dramas of Fulke Greville*, vol. II, p. 210, l. 41-42.

<sup>5</sup> *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, IV. ii. p. 65.

## VII

The distinctive quality of the tyrant of Elizabethan tragedy can be ascribed to the atmosphere of dynastic nationalism in which he was conceived. In his portrayal of such characters as Atreus, Seneca's main endeavour is to expose the pernicious effects of passion upon the microcosm. Medieval tragedians strike down virtuous as well as sinful kings, who by their sudden fall from eminence warn all men that they are sinful, that Fortune is irrational, and that worldly success must be feared. The sin against reason and the sin against God are preserved in Elizabethan tyrant-tragedies. To these vices the Renaissance dramatists added yet another—the sin against the commonweal—which they elaborated with more and more detail. Thus in the early Elizabethan morality play *Cambises*, the tyrant's salient crimes are wilful passion and a patent contempt for God's commandments, whereas in the later tyrant-tragedies increasing stress is laid upon the civic disasters wrought by unlawful kings:

O nation miserable,  
With an untitled tyrant bloody-scepter'd!<sup>1</sup>

Mordred leads a nation to disaster in civil war; the evil of faction, symbolized by Richard III, sets father fighting against son; Scotland groans and bleeds beneath the infamous dominion of Macbeth's avarice, sensuality, and thirst for blood; Greville makes bold to state that religion and the church decline into corruption under the tyrant's rule. It is characteristic of the Elizabethan reverence for hereditary succession that the worst offences against the public weal are perpetrated by the usurping tyrants who have achieved power by the horrible crime of killing God's vice-regent, a lawful king. Shakespeare's horror at the murder of an anointed hereditary king is typical; Macbeth is damned, and the national calamity engendered by his crime is symbolized by the images of cosmic disorder, disobedience, savagery, and darkness which run through the play. Sinning against his own soul, against God, and against his country, the ambitious tyrant is condemned three times over. Moreover, since tyrannical power found its outlet in such deadly sins as lechery, covetousness, envy, and wrath, it was natural to associate the tyrant with the permanent force of evil at work among men, and to regard him as an exponent of diabolism. Lucifer was the first great example of aspiring pride, of attempted usurpation, and of sinful rebellion against divine order; correspondingly, the Elizabethans' condemnation of the tyrant is coloured by the religious revulsion with which they contemplated the enormities of Anti-Christ.

Other factors besides dynastic nationalism and its attendant ethics and theology interested Elizabethans in the character of the tyrant. His com-

<sup>1</sup> *Macbeth*, iv. iii. 103.



posite constitution is, indeed, partly a result of the new spirit of nationalism. Machiavelli is of salient importance in this respect, both as a direct and as an indirect influence. The Machiavellian tyrant sets his will and his energy against Fortune, though it is, in truth, the scales of divine justice. A materialist in morals, he views events in their causal wordly sequence. A pragmatist in action, he utilizes opportunity, force, and cunning in an attempt to mould men's lives according to the pattern predetermined by his, not God's, will. He rejects deductive religious thought, and, with an empiricism worthy of a better cause, he applies inductive reasoning to secure his own advantage in a world which is governed by those who can seize a chance before it passes them. Mordred's exclamation is characteristic:

Whose refuge lies in chaunce, what dares he not?<sup>1</sup>

Just as Faustus aspires after unlawful supernatural power, so does the tyrant strive to attain unlawful political power, and in pursuit of his aims he combines scepticism with the urge to experiment. This dynamic quality in the tyrant which sets him in conflict with the order of God and the laws of men is ultimately fatal to him, but it is also the source of his tragic greatness. The tyrants Richard III and Macbeth, no less than Faustus, mark the advent of that preoccupation with the psychology of evil which is characteristic of the modern age. Faced by overwhelming odds, they stake their all upon a final desperate throw:

And damn'd be he that first cries 'Hold, enough'.

This ultimate gesture, this refusal to admit that all is lost, is the final witness of their heretical denial that 'whom the poets call Fortune, we know to be God'. They die unconverted, like Prometheans of a reversed moral order, and their perverted heroism leaves us prescient of Milton's greatest character-creation, a tyrant without a conscience.

<sup>1</sup> *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, IV. (p. 23).

## JOHN DONNE AND THE EMBLEMATIC PRACTICE

By JOSEF LEDERER

### I

'Since every poetical image contains a potential emblem, one can understand why emblems were the characteristic of that century in which the tendency to images reached its climax, the seventeenth century', says Professor M. Praz,<sup>1</sup> the only critic who treats this 'literary bypath' of the Renaissance and the Baroque as something more than a mere collector's curiosity.

In their purest form, then, emblems<sup>2</sup> are illustrations of conceits. Samuel Daniel, in the introductory essay to his translation of an Italian treatise on *imprese*, betrays a rudimentary appreciation of this æsthetic function of emblematic symbolism: '. . . besides the figuring of things corporall and of visible forme, men have also represented things incorporall, which they could not doe more fitly then by colours . . .'<sup>3</sup> Emblematicists themselves always insisted on a perfect balance between the 'body' of an emblem (the picture) and its 'soul' (the motto and the accompanying verse) as a requirement of an ideal emblem.

The seventeenth-century man had all the sensuality of the Renaissance man with a much greater longing for the spiritual. He was, in Herbert's phrase, 'a nothing between two Dishes',<sup>4</sup> suspended between reality and the impalpable, between intellect and emotions. The Baroque attempted the fusion of arts while the gap between the symbol and the thing signified was constantly widening. Emblems became a field for the play of intellectual fancy springing from a powerful source of emotion. In their small way they are the only instance of a successful *Gesamtkunstwerk*.

Though English Protestantism was not a very fertile ground for the extravagancies of emblem writers, the taste for emblems and devices seems to have been fairly widespread in England. Puritan writers were frequently influenced by Jesuit authors, which is not as paradoxical as it may sound,

<sup>1</sup> *Studies in Seventeenth-Century Imagery*, vol. 1, London, 1939 (translated from his *Studi sul concettismo*, Milan, 1934), p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> The Italian academies, robbed of their scholastic arguments by the Renaissance, were discussing the difference between the emblem and the *impresa* at great length and the academicians did not hesitate to abuse each other on account of the finest points. Finally, one of them, the Abbot Ferro (*Teatro d'Imprese*, Venice, 1623), gave the judgment that the distinction was really quite negligible and therefore not justifiable, but only after having himself written several hundred pages on the subject. See E. N. S. Thompson, *Literary Bypaths of the Renaissance*, New Haven, 1924.

<sup>3</sup> *The Worthy tract of Paulus Iovius, containing a Discourse of rare inventions, both Militarie and Amorous, called Imprese*, London, 1585, 'To the Friendly Reader'.

<sup>4</sup> I. Walton, *The Lives*, 1670, *The Life of Mr. George Herbert*, p. 68.

since they had more than one thing in common: a militant spirit, fanaticism, and a passion for edification.<sup>1</sup>

Before the death of Donne several emblem books or works discussing the practice were published or written in England.<sup>2</sup> Donne was, of course, not limited to English works. His library, as we know, was well stocked with foreign books and it is highly probable that some emblem books were among them. Well over seven hundred emblem books appeared before the death of Shakespeare,<sup>3</sup> and the rather ruthless plagiarism of the writers makes it often quite impossible to trace an emblem to its original source.

In the seventeenth century the medieval conception of poetry as a branch of rhetoric still lingered in the minds of poets, and a poet's idea of what was admissible to draw upon for his imagery vastly differed from the stricter notion of later poetical codes. The much-praised modernity of Donne's technique may well be exaggerated, as many of his recent critics are only too apt to rejoice over Donne's originality, looking eagerly for

<sup>1</sup> Cf. T. Tramer, *Studien zu den Anfängen der puritanischen Emblemliteratur in England* (Dissertation, Basle), Berlin, 1934, and A. Spamer, *Das kleine Andachtsbild vom XIV. bis zum XX. Jahrhundert*, Munich, 1930, pp. 157 ff.

<sup>2</sup> The first and largest English emblem book, Geoffrey Whitney's *Choice of Emblemes and other Devises*, was published abroad, in 1586 in Leyden. (Reprinted by H. Green, London, 1866.) It is an unoriginal book, a florilegium from the most popular Continental collections, but it represents the best emblematic work of its time. A year earlier appeared the already mentioned tract of Samuel Daniel, a translation of Paolo Giovio's *Dia logo delle Imprese militari e amorose* (Rome, 1555). The translator's preface shows that he was well acquainted with all the subtleties of the art. Then followed Abraham Fraunce with *Insignium, Armorum, Emblematum, Hieroglyphicorum et Symbolorum, quae ab Italis Imprese nominantur, Explicatio* (London, 1588). The *Heroicall Devises* of the French emblemist Claude Paradin appeared in P.S.'s translation in 1591 in London. Andrew Willet's *Sacrorum Emblematum Centuria Una* was a so-called 'naked' emblem book. It was published in Cambridge in the last decade of the sixteenth century, at a time when it was both difficult and expensive to procure in England good engravings. Henry Peacham published his *Minerva Britannia or a Garden of Heroicall Devises* in 1612 in London. *The Mirrour of Maiestie* (London, 1618; reprinted by H. Green for the Holbein Society of Manchester with a part of *Minerva Britannia*, 1870) is ascribed to Sir Henry Goodyer, an intimate friend of Donne. The lines of emblem 28:

Th' ascending Path that up to wisdome leades  
Is rough, uneven, steepe: and he that treads  
Therein, must many a tedious Danger meet,  
..... till he come at last  
Up to Her gate, . . .

are obviously a paraphrase of Donne's:

..... On a huge hill,  
Cragged, and steep, Truth stands, and hee that will  
Reach her, about must, and about must goe;

(Satyre III, ll. 79-81, Grierson, vol. 1, p. 157. 'Grierson' refers throughout to H. C. J. Grierson's edition of *The Poems of John Donne*, 2 vols., Oxford, 1912.)

Further, there were printed Thomas Peyton's *The Glasse of Time in the First Age* (1620) and *In the Second Age* (1623), both in London. (Both reprinted in New York, 1886.) William Wyrley's *The True Use of Armorie* (London, 1592) is a semi-heraldic work and Francis Thynne's *Emblemes and Epigrames*, another 'naked' book, probably written in 1600, was not then printed. (Published by E.E.T.S., 1876.) Francis Quarles's *Emblemes*, the emblem book best known to-day, did not appear till four years after Donne's death.

<sup>3</sup> See Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

points of contact with the modern English school, and overlooking the fact that much of Donne's vaunted modernism was quite common in the style of his contemporaries, if not in England at least on the Continent. The late Lord Alfred Douglas was quick enough to recognize this fallacy and did not hesitate to condemn in Donne what had offended his conservative taste in 'modern heretical verse', as he called it.<sup>1</sup>

The emblem writers did not regard their work as a trifling pastime. They were mostly men of science, humanists, many of them Italian academicians full of disputative passion and seriousness. As for the poets of the seventeenth century, wit was for them anything but flippancy; it was rather a brilliant result of long study, a quintessence of deep learning. For their compositions they drew on the vast stock of Renaissance, medieval and ancient knowledge: poetry, science, real or otherwise, ancient historians, theological works, fanciful natural history, animal lore of the bestiaries, proverbs in current use—in other words, the same sources which the poets could and did exploit quite independently. Therefore many instances of a seeming connection between emblematic works and literary passages often turn out to be mere illusions.<sup>2</sup>

Many English poets and playwrights were, however, directly influenced by emblem writers.<sup>3</sup> Richard Crashaw happened to be the most devoted to this Baroque symbolism. He was thoroughly versed in Jesuit emblem books and his imagery is richly decorated with devotional emblems and impresse.<sup>4</sup>

There can be no doubt that Donne knew and appreciated this witty foreign invention.<sup>5</sup> His innovations of style were the result of a conscious effort. He was anxious to part company with the accepted contemporary fashion. For a poet striving to say what is seldom said and, moreover, to say it in a new way, witty but at the same time scholarly, which was often one and the same thing for him, emblems must have been a welcome addition to the body of his bookish knowledge. As he seemed to belong to the passionate and dramatic but also sober, earnest and even coarse side of the Baroque, he cannot be expected to have had Crashaw's predilection

<sup>1</sup> *The Principles of Poetry*, London, 1943, p. 21.

<sup>2</sup> The modern editor of Alciati, Henry Green, an enthusiastic Victorian bibliographer, used this deceptive method in his book *Shakespeare and the Emblem Writers* (London, 1870). He registered every instance where Shakespeare and some emblemist used a somewhat similar image or even the same word. Green's book, apart from having long been the only, though none too accurate, reference book for the student of emblematic literature, is therefore practically worthless as a critical study.

<sup>3</sup> See Praz, *op. cit.*, pp. 193-207.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. A. Warren, *Richard Crashaw. A Study in Baroque Sensibility*, Louisiana State University, 1939, pp. 71 ff.

<sup>5</sup> T. O. Beachcroft in 'Quarles—and the Emblem Habit' (*Dublin Review*, January 1931, pp. 91-3) ascribes an emblematic meaning to various poems of Donne. His knowledge of emblematic literature is, however, negligible.

for the meltingly sensual emblems of the Jesuits which were so completely in accord with their external semi-mysticism.

Yet the emblematic practice may sometimes be consonant with his method of expressing deeply personal conflicts in terms of the most abstruse sciences, of externalizing and objectifying subjective states of mind by novel and startling images. The greater the confusion in his mind, the more tangible and exact were these metaphors; and the more abstract the matter discussed, the more realistic was his imagery.

How far some of his images were really drawn from actual emblem books remains, of course, impossible to demonstrate incontrovertibly. But critical sifting of Donne's imagery will show that there are several possibilities of establishing a correspondence with the emblematic practice without unduly stressing direct influences; for the purpose of the collected evidence is to illustrate Donne's participation in the general style-currents of his age and the effect it had on his creative process. First of all, Donne may be using an image in a way which has a decidedly emblematic cast, without necessarily having had recourse to one of the emblem books; or he may lift an image straight from one of these works or from a poet who had done so before him; or again he writes a clearly emblematic poem or prose passage having in mind an existing device.

The word 'emblem' occurs altogether seven times in his poetry,<sup>1</sup> always carrying its orthodox meaning, and allusions to 'emblems', 'hieroglyphs', and 'types' are equally frequent in his prose works, especially in his sermons.

## II

Donne, it is truly said, cleansed English love poetry of the Petrarchan mood, and so it is almost paradoxical to find one of his favourite images clearly Petrarchan in origin, if not in spirit. Some images have a kind of immortality throughout the ages of verse-making. Many of Petrarch's metaphors were inspired by the late Greek anthologists and then were developed and repeated *ad nauseam* by scores of Petrarchists. They became one of the chief sources of emblem writers, and from their pictorial representation in a changed, but still recognizable form, they found their way back into poetry. In the second and third decades of the seventeenth century emblematicists, mostly Jesuits, began to convert amatory emblems to devotional purposes with the mixture of crude realism and ecstatic

<sup>1</sup> 'A Valediction: of weeping', l. 7, Grierson, vol. 1, p. 38; 'Elegie xviii', l. 79, Grierson, vol. 1, p. 119; 'To the Countesse of Bedford. On New-yeares day', l. 2, Grierson, vol. 1, p. 198; 'Elegie upon . . . Prince Henry', l. 38, Grierson, vol. 1, p. 268; 'The Annuntiation and Passion', l. 4, Grierson, vol. 1, p. 334; 'A Hymne to Christ', l. 2, Grierson, vol. 1, p. 352; *ibid.*, l. 4, Grierson, vol. 1, p. 352.



mysticism so typical of the Baroque. A single passage will suffice to illustrate this point; the image of his love comes to Petrarch to torment him:

E'n sul cor, quasi fiero leon, rugge  
La notte, allor quand'io posar devrei! <sup>1</sup>

This note of heart imagery, with all its subtle naïvety of sentiment, is heightened in Donne to a provocative and, at times, crude literalness. Donne's employment of the image of the heart reminds us of the tension arising between the 'body' and the 'soul' of an emblem; he takes a metaphor and treats it as a real, palpable object to produce a new, superimposed metaphor. Having 'ripp'd' his chest 'and searched where hearts did lye', he could not find his heart:

Yet I found something like a heart,  
But colours it, and corners had . . . <sup>2</sup>

The 'broken heart' of the common saw becomes a solid object, a piece of china or glass; the splinters:

. . . as broken glasses show  
A hundred lesser faces, so  
My ragges of heart can like, wish and adore, . . . <sup>3</sup>

It is possible to dismiss the various cardiomorphoses of the post-Tridentine emblem books <sup>4</sup> as excessive Baroque licence; the heart is weighed in scales, tied with cords, split open and showing hieroglyphs, a maiden with closed eyes holds a huge heart with a large wide-open eye to symbolize the motto EGO DORMIO ET COR MEVM VIGILAT, <sup>5</sup> Jesus sweeps with a broom the human heart of snakes and toads. <sup>6</sup> The heart suffers sundry changes: MOLLESCO, CRESCO, ALTA PETO, AMO, LATEO, &c. <sup>7</sup> Yet none of them has surpassed the blankly visual progress of Donne's heart bordering on the grotesque:

. . . poore heart  
That labour'st yet to nestle thee,  
And think'st by hovering here to get a part  
In a forbidden or forbidding tree . . . <sup>8</sup>

Religious writers did not scruple to take profane imagery and apply it to

<sup>1</sup> *Il Canzoniere* I, cclvi, ll. 7-8, ed. M. Scherillo, Milan, 1908, p. 310.

<sup>2</sup> 'The Legacie', ll. 17-18, Grierson, vol. I, p. 20.

<sup>3</sup> 'The broken heart', ll. 29-31, Grierson, vol. I, p. 49.

<sup>4</sup> See Praz, *op. cit.*, pp. 138-42.

<sup>5</sup> B. van Haefst, *Schola Cordis*, Antwerp, 1635.

<sup>6</sup> A. Wierix, *Cor Iesu amanti sacrum*, plates reproduced in E. Luzvic and E. Binet, *Le Cœur dévot, &c.*, edition Douai, 1627. Cf. R. Sharrock, 'Bunyan and the English Emblem Writers', *R.E.S.*, xxi, April 1945, pp. 109-10.

<sup>7</sup> D. Cramer, *Emblemata sacra*, Frankfurt, 1624. Cf. also J. Mannich, *Sacra Emblemata LXXVI*, Nuremberg, 1625; F. Pona, *Cardiomorphoseos*, Verona, 1645, &c.

<sup>8</sup> 'The Blossome', ll. 9-12, Grierson, vol. I, p. 59.

the new cults of the Infant Jesus and the Sacred Heart. The little Cupids and amoretti which people the pictures of Vænius<sup>1</sup> and other Dutchmen, are transformed into animæ and Infants, the Anadyomene becomes the Virgin and the Petrarchan antics of the lover's heart continue in the guise of a holier figure. Nor is there a cleavage between profane and sacred imagery in Donne. The heart of the deceased lady in the elegy 'Death' grows into the flaming bush of the Old Testament, a favourite emblematic device:<sup>2</sup>

Her heart was that strange bush, where, sacred fire,  
Religion, did not consume, but inspire  
... piety, ...<sup>3</sup>

Neat, almost quaint, is the clearly emblematic image from the 'Holy Sonnet I' where he addresses God as he did his mistress: '... thou [may] like Adamant draw mine iron heart'.<sup>4</sup> God's love is a ram which opens the gates of the sinner's heart:

Batter my heart, three person'd God; for, you  
As yet but knocke, breathe, shine, and seeke to mend ...<sup>5</sup>

The very anatomical and physiological properties of the human heart hide a hieroglyphic significance:

And crosse thy heart: for that in man alone  
Points downwards, and hath palpitation.<sup>6</sup>  
My heart is by dejection, clay,  
And by selfe-murder, red.<sup>7</sup>

All these metaphors show an analogy with contemporary or slightly later emblems. By a strong visualization the image acquires an extraordinary hardness and correspondingly a certain brittleness; there is always the danger that it will snap and become ridiculous, though Donne, unlike the more extravagant and looser Marini, manages to hold it in balance wonderfully well.

<sup>1</sup> O. Vænius (van Veen), *Amorum Emblemata*, Antwerp, 1608. An English version (published also in 1608) was dedicated to William, Earl of Pembroke (Lord Herbert) and Philip, Earl of Montgomery.

<sup>2</sup> For instance, F. Picinelli in the introduction ('Dell' Etimologia, ed Antichità dell' Imprese') to his enormous emblematic dictionary (*Mondo Simbolico formato d'Imprese*, Milan, 1669; first edition, Milan, 1653), a compendium of quotations from poetry and sermons of several generations of the 16th and 17th centuries, offering 'an infinite number of conceits for the use of orators, preachers, academicians, poets', cites the opinion of some writers that the Pentateuch should be read as 'abbozzatura d'Imprese'. 'Il rovo di Moise', he says, 'co' l' soprascritto; ARDET, NEC COMBVRITVR, parole dell' Essodo, cap. 3. 2. non è egli un impresa rappresentativa del popolo Israelitico ... ?'

<sup>3</sup> 'Death', ll. 45-7, Grierson, vol. 1, p. 286.

<sup>4</sup> L. 14, Grierson, vol. 1, p. 322.

<sup>5</sup> 'Holy Sonnets', xiv, ll. 1-2, Grierson, vol. 1, p. 328.

<sup>6</sup> 'The Crosse', ll. 51-2, Grierson, vol. 1, p. 333.

<sup>7</sup> 'The Litanie', i, ll. 5-6, Grierson, vol. 1, p. 338.

Too often unable to grasp the supernatural, to touch the impalpable, to introduce some order into the tormenting turmoil of his mind, Donne attempts sometimes to fix and rationalize the irrational by means of comparison with a precise object. The clock pleased Donne by its mechanical ingenuity and exactness. In his day it still was a technical miracle. 'Questa nobil macchina, progidio raro dell'arte', exclaims Filippo Picinelli in his Dictionary.<sup>1</sup> He recommends the clock as emblematic of a just prince, quoting Bargagli's<sup>2</sup> picture of the clock with the Sun in the Zodiac and the motto *ÆQVE IMPARTITVR*. It may also symbolize human life (*VARIANDO CONSTAT*).

As a symbol of man's life and its brevity, and of the soul, the clock occurs several times in Donne's verse:

Alas, we scarce live long enough to try  
Whether a true made clocke run right, or lie,<sup>3</sup>

Elizabeth Drury may not be dead, but only

. . . as a sundred clocke is peecemeale laid,  
Not to be lost, but by the makers hand  
Repollish'd, without error then to stand . . .<sup>4</sup>

and in his prose:

But will *God* pretend to make a *Watch*, and leave out the *springe*? to make so many various wheels in the faculties of the Soule, and in the organs of the body, and leave out *Grace*, that should move them? or wil *God* make a *springe*, and not *wind* it up? <sup>5</sup>

Donne addresses his dead patron in a generous hyperbole:

Why wouldst not thou then, which hadst such a soule,  
A clock so true, as might the Sunne controule,  
And daily hadst from him, who gave it thee,  
Instructions, such as it could never be  
Disordered, stay here, as a generall  
And great Sun-dyall, to have set us All? <sup>6</sup>

As, in the emblematic practice, the moon stands for mundane and transitory causes and the sun for God, Picinelli says that 'l'horologio da sole, segnato co'l titolo; ME PHOEBVS, NON PHOEBE, servirà per tipo d'huomo giusto, che non dal mondo, mà da Dio prende la directione, e la luce,'<sup>7</sup> the very words of Donne's adulation of Lady Lucy's brother.

The magnetic properties of the lodestone in the compass fascinated

<sup>1</sup> *Ed. cit.*, XXI, x, p. 763.

<sup>2</sup> S. Bargagli, *Delle Imprese*, Siena, 1578. (Reprinted with parts II, III, Venice, 1594.)

<sup>3</sup> 'The first Anniversary', ll. 129-30, Grierson, vol. I, p. 235.

<sup>4</sup> 'A Funerall Elegie', ll. 38-40, Grierson, vol. I, p. 246.

<sup>5</sup> *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions*, London 1624, Expostulation I, p. 14.

<sup>6</sup> 'Obsequies to the Lord Harrington &c.', ll. 149-54, Grierson, vol. I, p. 276.

<sup>7</sup> *Ed. cit.*, XXI, ix, p. 763.

Donne because they supplied comparison with the theotropic tendency in human beings:

And though the faithfulest heart is not ever directly, & constantly upon God, but that it sometimes descends also to Reason; yet it is thereby so departed from him, but that it still looks towards him, though not fully to him: as the Compass is ever Northward, though it decline, and have often variations towards East, and West.<sup>1</sup>

Neither is that starre which we call the North-pole, or by which we know the North-pole, the very Pole it selfe; but we call it so, . . . because it is the nearest starre to that Pole. He that comes as neere uprightnesse, as infirmities admit, is an upright man, though he have some obliquities. To God himself we may alwayes go in a direct line, a straight, a perpendicular line; For God is verticall to me, over my head now, . . .<sup>2</sup>

The lodestar was originally an erotic emblem. Vænius has a picture of Cupid gazing at the face of a woman. He holds a quadrant in his hand; a compass with the needle pointing to the lodestar completes the emblem. The motto declares: ERO NAVIS AMORIS, HABENS TE ASTRVM LUCIDVM.<sup>3</sup> Vænius's emblem descends from Giovio, who uses the motto ASPICIT VNAM.<sup>4</sup> With a great ease the Catholic emblematicist H.A. turned it in his English emblem book into two Marian devices with the mottoes IN ITINERE PHARUS; RESPICE STELLAM, INVOCA MARIAM, spiritual emblems similar to that in Donne's prose.<sup>5</sup>

Two other religious emblems are the cedar and the sun. In 'The Annuntiation and Passion' Donne's soul sees

. . . a Cedar plant it selfe, and fall,  
Her Maker put to making, and the head  
Of life, at once, not yet alive, yet dead<sup>6</sup>.

On 25 March 160<sup>8</sup><sub>9</sub> both great feasts fell on the same day, a rare occurrence which inspired Donne to a poem full of mystical and emblematic allusions.<sup>7</sup> The Cedar of Lebanon, as an emblem of high birth,<sup>8</sup> is, of course, symbolical of the Virgin and Christ. Thus Picinelli mentions the Marian device of Monsignor Aresio, a cedar bearing flower and fruit at the

<sup>1</sup> *Essays in Divinity*, London, 1651, p. 38.

<sup>2</sup> *LXXX Sermons*, London, 1640, lxvii, p. 677.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, embl. 20, p. 39.

<sup>4</sup> *Dialogo dell' Imprese*, edition Lyons, 1574, p. 90. Cf. Whitney, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

<sup>5</sup> William Drummond of Hawthornden describes in a letter to Ben Jonson (1 July, 1619) 'the *Impressaes* and Emblemes on a Bed of State' of 'the late Queen Mary' which were embroidered by her own hand; 'the first is the Loadstone turning towards the pole, the word her Majesties name turned on an Anagram, *Maria Stuart, sa vertu, m'attire*, which is not much inferior to *Veritas armata* [sic]'. (*The History of Scotland*, 1681, pp. 395-6.)

<sup>6</sup> H. Hawkins [?], or H. Aston [?], *Parthenia Sacra*, Rouen, 1633, pp. 114-25.

<sup>7</sup> Ll. 8-10, Grierson, vol. I, p. 334.

<sup>8</sup> See Grierson, vol. II, p. 238.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Chapman's *Tragedy of Byron*, v, iii, 13-14, *The Plays and Poems of George Chapman*, ed. T. M. Parrott, London, 1910, vol. I, p. 259.

same time, with the motto NOVA, ET VETERA SERVAVI TIBI, and a similar emblem with the motto NEL FIORE IL FRVITO.<sup>1</sup>

Evidently emblematic is the frequently employed image of the sun of which Donne was fond because it gave him occasion for the pun on 'sun-son'. Though condemned by stricter emblematic decorum which required that an emblem should be noble, rebuses and pictorial representations of puns were by no means rejected by authors of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.<sup>2</sup> Like Hamlet's puns, Donne's quibbling is not frivolous; it usually marks a state of a profound emotion or spiritual anxiety. If used in conjunction with an emblematic image the pun contributes to the clarity of the conceit and renders a prayer more penetrating:

*Salute the last and everlasting day,  
Joy at the uprising of this Sunne, and Sonne . . .*<sup>3</sup>

The 'sacred Academie' of Church Fathers may be likened to smaller luminaries: ' . . . call them stars, but not the Sunne'.<sup>4</sup> In apprehension of death and Judgment, under the oppression of Original Sin, Donne exclaims to God:

But swear by thy selfe, that at my death, thy sonne  
Shall shine as he shines now, and heretofore . . . ;<sup>5</sup>

and in the hymn 'To Christ':

Swear by thy self that at my Death, thy Sunn  
Shall shine as it shines nowe, & heretofore . . .<sup>6</sup>

The sun is a symbol of Christ's Passion and Resurrection, the one-in-two miracle of setting and rising, expressed, as often, by a fervent paradox:

There [in the East] I should see a Sunne, by rising set,  
And by that setting endlesse day beget;  
But that Christ on this Crosse, did rise and fall,  
Sinne had eternally benighted all.<sup>7</sup>

It may also symbolize the Scriptures:

. . . we have . . . the Sunne, which is the Fountaine and Treasure of all  
created light, for an Embleme of that third best light of our understanding,  
which is the Word of God.

Donne suggests himself a suitable motto from the *Proverbs*: '*Mandatum lucerna, & Lex lux*'.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Ed. cit.*, IX, viii, p. 417.

<sup>2</sup> See Praz, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

<sup>3</sup> 'La Corona, Ascension', ll. 1-2, Grierson, vol. I, p. 321.

<sup>4</sup> 'The Litanie', XIII, l. 117, Grierson, vol. I, p. 343.

<sup>5</sup> 'A Hymne to God the Father', ll. 15-16, Grierson, vol. I, p. 369.

<sup>6</sup> Ll. 15-16, Grierson, vol. I, p. 370.

<sup>7</sup> 'Goodfriday, 1613', ll. 11-14, Grierson, vol. I, p. 336.

<sup>8</sup> *Biathanatos*, London, n.d., p. 154.



Picinelli speaks of Bargagli's device of Christ the Judge, the sun and the motto VNIVS SPLENDOR, INCENDIVM ALTERIVS; 'tale Cristo sole eterno, nel finale giudicio ripartirà gli splendori di gloria à i giusti, e gl'incendij tormentosi à gli scelerati'.<sup>1</sup> With the motto OCCIDIT ORITVRVS it may serve for the impresa of Christ, 'mistico Sole'.<sup>2</sup> Donne's monument in the crypt of St. Paul's Cathedral was designed by himself on emblematic principles: the statue shows his dead body shrouded, with closed eyes but standing in an upright position facing the East; the last two lines of the epitaph, also composed by the Dean, allude to an erroneous Vulgate reading of the Hebrew:

HIC LICET IN OCCIDVO CINERE ASPICIT EVM  
CVIVS NOMEN EST ORIENS.<sup>3</sup>

### III

The Renaissance and later the Baroque period took an even more pompous delight in magnificent pageantry. Solemn entries of princes into towns, canonizations of saints of the Tridentine Church, court masques, wedding ceremonies, and funeral processions achieved an unequalled splendour in the first half of the seventeenth century. Petrarch's *Trionfi* furnished innumerable ideas for the architects and decorators whose task it was to contribute to the sumptuousness of ceremony. Even great masters like Mantegna and Dürer painted triumphs and triumphal arches studded with emblematic insignia.<sup>4</sup> It is sufficient to look at Inigo Jones's designs for court masques to see how far, under the influence of poetry, he abandoned his otherwise very guarded Vitruvian principles. The wedding of the Princess Elizabeth to the Prince Palatine in 1613 had, as Camden says in his *Annales*, 'all the Pomp and Glory that so much grandeur could express'. She wore white vestments, 'the Emblem of Innocency; her hair dishevel'd hanging down her Back at length, an Ornament of Virginity; a Crown of pure Gold upon her Head, the Cognizance of Majesty'.<sup>5</sup> Donne's 'Epithalamion' written for the occasion, though an adroit piece, full of clever and apt conceits, lacks the usual magnificent disregard for his theme which was more in place in his funeral elegies with their long-drawn, brooding hyperboles, and remains brilliantly on the surface, hardly more than a part of the general *décor*, which probably was just what the patrons expected from an epithalamion. It is, therefore, not surprising to find in it the image of the phoenix, threadbare enough in poetry, but used with a

<sup>1</sup> *Ed. cit.*, I, v, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>3</sup> See Grierson, vol. II, pp. 248-9.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. L. Volkmann, *Bilderschriften der Renaissance*, Leipzig, 1923, pp. 26-8, 82-95 respectively.

<sup>5</sup> Quoted from Grierson, vol. II, p. 92.

typically emblematic twist, one more impresa to add to those which probably adorned the hall. One can imagine that the miraculous bird was much to the taste of emblem writers. Of the many fabulous properties, the most popular with the later emblematisers was the uniqueness of the phoenix. In a time of splendid absolutism it was selected as the most fitting emblem of princes. C. Paradin, whose book of heroical devices was printed twelve times between 1551 and 1600, prints the emblem with the motto VNICA SEMPER AVIS, because 'Phoenix semper unica, sic optima quaeque, & pretiosissima sunt inventu difficilima.'<sup>1</sup> In his complimentary ardour Donne perverts the miracle, calling the Prince and Princess a couple of phoenixes:

Two Phœnixes, whose joyned breasts  
Are unto one another mutuall nests,  
Where motion kindles such fires, as shall give  
Yong Phœnixes, and yet the old shall live.<sup>2</sup>

Though prophetic of the many children of the future Winter Queen, this *tour de force* is somewhat shallow, constituting, as it does, the mainstay of the poem. The consummation of the marriage restores the emblem to its former significance:

For since these two are two no more,  
Ther's but one Phenix still, as was before.<sup>3</sup>

It is a pertinent illustration of the mutual interdependence of profane and sacred poetry in the seventeenth century that, in a conceit worthy of Donne, the author of *Partheneia Sacra* applies the emblem of the phoenix with 'joyned breasts', or, as he says, 'with a twin-like heart', to the Union of Mother and Son: EADEM INTER SE dash, SVNT EADEM VNI TERTIO.<sup>4</sup>

The well-known love emblem of the sunflower or the chicory following the sun (EN TOVS LIEVX IE TE SVIS),<sup>5</sup> slightly changed, figures in Donne, with unusual prettiness:

The Marrigold opens to the Sunne, though it have no tongue to say so, the  
Atheist does see God, though he have not grace to confesse it.<sup>6</sup>

In the mournful litany in the opening lines of 'The second Anniversarie'

<sup>1</sup> *Symbola Heroica* M. Claudii Paradini et D. Gabrielis Simeonis, edition Antwerp, 1583, p. 92. Paradin's *Devises heroiques* (Lyons, 1551) and Simeoni's *Imprese eroiche e morali* (Lyons, 1559) were first published together in 1562 in Antwerp.

<sup>2</sup> 'An Epithalamion . . . on the Lady Elizabeth', ll. 23-6, Grierson, vol. 1, p. 128.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, ll. 101-2, p. 130.

<sup>4</sup> The verse declares:

The Sonne's and Mothers paines in one are mixt,  
His side, a Launce, her soule a Sword transfixt.  
Two harts in one, one Phenix love contrives:  
One wound in two, and two in one revives'.

<sup>5</sup> M. Scève, *Delie obiect de plus haulte vertu*, Lyons, 1544, device 16. Cf. also Daniel, *op. cit.*, 'To the Friendly Reader'.

<sup>6</sup> *Fifty Sermons*, London, 1649, xxxi, p. 275.

where Donne describes the misery and decay of the world after the death of Elizabeth Drury, there is a simile which is the theme of several emblems:

Or as a Lute, which in moist weather, rings  
Her knell alone, by cracking of her strings . . .<sup>1</sup>

Picinelli cites the emblem of Alcibiade Lucarini who 'per dinotare che le disgratie succedono anco nel mezzo alle felicità, figurò un liuto, con una corda spezzata, ed il motto; MEDIIS ETIAM IOCIS'.<sup>2</sup> It has the same painful abruptness as Donne's conceit; with the death of the girl all joys came to a sudden end.

Another musical instrument, the organ, is employed in emblem literature as a symbol of man's harmony with God. A preacher, says *Mondo Simbolico*, is an organ into which the Holy Ghost is blowing, AFFLATVM RESONAT; the Apostles are a choir of divine harmony filled with the breath of the Spirit, INFLAT DVM INFLVIT.<sup>3</sup> Donne's metaphors of the organ bear a very close resemblance to this symbolism. The world is an organ,

. . . those fine spirits which do tune, and set  
This Organ, are those peeces which beget  
Wonder and love; . . .<sup>4</sup>

Elizabeth Drury shares this metaphor with Lord Harrington:

Faire soule, which wast, not onely, as all soules bee,  
Then when thou wast infused, harmony,  
But did'st continue so; and now dost beare  
A part in Gods great organ, this whole Spheare . . .<sup>5</sup>

As Picinelli's Apostles, God's 'Eagle-sighted Prophets' in Donne

. . . were thy Churches Organs, and did sound  
That harmony, which made of two  
One law, . . .<sup>6</sup>

and Sir Philip Sidney and his sister, the Countess of Pembroke, are

Two, by their bloods, and by thy Spirit one;  
A Brother and a Sister, made by thee  
The Organ, where thou art the Harmony.<sup>7</sup>

It may be seen by now how very anxious Donne was to enrich his imagery by novel, sometimes emblematic, metaphors, or to give the old ones a provocatively new import. He had little patience with the obsolete

<sup>1</sup> Ll. 19-20, Grierson, vol. I, p. 251.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, xxiii, iii, p. 805.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, xxiii, vii, pp. 810, 811.

<sup>4</sup> 'A Funerall Elegie', ll. 27-9, Grierson, vol. I, p. 246.

<sup>5</sup> 'Obsequies', ll. 1-4, Grierson, vol. I, p. 271.

<sup>6</sup> 'The Litanie', viii, ll. 65-7, Grierson, vol. I, p. 340.

<sup>7</sup> 'Upon the translation of the Psalmes', ll. 14-16, Grierson, vol. I, p. 348. Cf. *XXVI Sermons*, London, 1661, xxiv, p. 343.

moralized emblems of the Renaissance; he condemns the contemporary London theatres, because

. . . these mimicke antiques jeast,  
Whose deepest projects, and egregious gests  
Are but dull Moralls of a game at Chests.<sup>1</sup>

Such still quite medieval moralizations can be found in Gilles Corrozet's emblem book and other works of the early sixteenth century: at the end of a game the victorious player is putting the checkmated King into a bag. The motto declares: LA FIN NOVS FAICT TOVS EGAVLX, and the verse expounds the 'dull' moral:

La terre est eguale à chascun,  
Par tous les pays & provinces,  
Aussi tost faict pourrir les princes,  
Que les corps du pauvre commun.<sup>2</sup>

Donne consciously avoids conventional images which abound in the verse of greater poets than himself. The word 'rose', for instance, occurs only once in the whole body of his poetry, and in an uncommonly naturalistic comparison at that: 'sweat drops' on the breast of his mistress are 'As the sweet sweat of Roses in a Still . . .'<sup>3</sup> More meaning should, therefore, be read into the curious passage in 'The Canonization' with its cluster of more or less commonplace images:

Call us what you will, wee are made such by love;  
Call her one, mee another flye,  
We're Tapers too, and at our owne cost die,  
And wee in us finde the'Eagle and the Dove.  
The Phœnix ridle hath more wit  
By us, we two being one, are it.  
So to one neutrall thing both sexes fit,  
Wee dye and rise the same, and prove  
Mysterious by this love.<sup>4</sup>

If these images appeared singly, one would not dare suspect their emblematic origin and significance; but here it looks as if Donne was running quickly through the pages of an emblem book. There is also the conspicuous use of the words 'ridle' (often only another word for emblem) and 'mysterious' (emblem writers always emphasized the esoteric character of their art). The conceit of the phoenix is the same as that in the epithalamion. The uniqueness of the bird is likened to the unifying embrace of lovers.

<sup>1</sup> 'To Sr Henry Wootton', ll. 22-4, Grierson, vol. 1, p. 188.

<sup>2</sup> *Hecatomgraphie*, Paris, 1540, quoted from Green, *op. cit.*, p. 321. Cf. also G. de la Perrière, *Le Theatre des bons engins*, Paris, 1539, embl. 27.

<sup>3</sup> 'Elegie VIII', l. 1, Grierson, vol. 1, p. 90.

<sup>4</sup> Ll. 19-27, Grierson, vol. 1, p. 15.

The self-destructive infatuation of the moth for the flame of the candle is one of the most hackneyed metaphors of poetry, which the emblematisers rescued from its staleness by pictorial representation. It is included in many of the emblem books, frequently with the mottoes *COSÌ DE BEN AMAR PORTO TORMENTO*,<sup>1</sup> taken from Petrarch's canzone 'Ben mi credea', *COSÌ VIVO PIACER CONDUCCE A MORTE*,<sup>2</sup> *BREVIS ET DAMNOSA VOLVPTAS*,<sup>3</sup> or some other well-meant warning. As with the phoenix, Donne gives the faded figure a new lease of life by uniting its polarity in his conception of passion, which, while abolishing the original sense of the emblem, establishes it as a fresh and vigorous image. In the metaphor of the eagle and the dove Donne's mysticism of the flesh is expressed with the same technical cunning. Hadrianus Iunius has a picture of a caged dove upon which an eagle swoops down. The motto, also taken from Petrarch, on a scroll round the cage, reads: *IL MAL MI PREME E MI SPAVENTA IL PEGGIO*.<sup>4</sup>

The episode of the elephant killed by a mouse in that obscure satire 'The Progresse of the Soule' has, like most others in the poem, some concealed meaning which has now become hard to decipher. If, as Sir Herbert Grierson asserts, 'the great soule which here amongst us now doth dwell' is Queen Elizabeth, whose body is the receptacle of archheretics' universal soul, and if the poem was written in the widespread bitterness following the fall and death of Essex,<sup>5</sup> and there is no reason to doubt it, it may not be quite so fantastic to conjecture that the elephant may be an allegory of the executed earl, the great and generous gentleman, the victim of slander, as he must have seemed in the eyes of his partisans:

Natures great master-peece, an Elephant,  
The onely harmlesse great thing; the giant  
Of beasts; who thought, no more had gone, to make one wise  
But to be just, and thankfull, loth to offend,  
(Yet nature hath given him no knees to bend) . . .<sup>7</sup>

In the emblematic practice the elephant stood always for grandeur wedded to meekness. In hieroglyphics an elephant shepherding a flock of sheep reads *MANSVETUDO*.<sup>8</sup> In Whitney there is under the motto *NVSQVAM TVTA FIDES* an emblem<sup>9</sup> whose picture depicts hunters preparing to kill an

<sup>1</sup> H. Iunius, *Emblemata*, Antwerp, 1565, embl. 49. Cf. also Theocritus à Ganda (D. Heinsius), *Quæris quid sit Amor*, Amsterdam, n.d., embl. 8.

<sup>2</sup> For instance, Paradis-Simeoni, *ed. cit.*, p. 283.

<sup>3</sup> For instance, Vænius, *op. cit.*, embl. 52.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, embl. 39. This very common emblem is also mentioned by Drummond: 'A Bird in a Cage, and a Hawk flying above, with the word, *il mal me preme & me spaventa Peggio*'. (*Ed. cit.*, p. 396.)

<sup>5</sup> Ll. 61-2, Grierson, vol. 1, p. 297.

<sup>6</sup> See Grierson, vol. II, p. 219.

<sup>7</sup> *Op. cit.*, ll. 381-5, Grierson, vol. 1, p. 310.

<sup>8</sup> P. Valeriano, *Hieroglyphica*, Basle, 1556, Bk. 2.

<sup>9</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 150. Cf. J. Sambucus, *Emblemata*, Antwerp, 1564, p. 184.



elephant whom they had trapped; the verse bears some resemblance to Donne's passage:

The Olephant so huge, and stronge to see,  
No perill fear'd: but thought a sleepe to gaine  
But foes before had undermin'de the tree,  
And downe he falles; and so by them was slaine . . .

Another emblem in Whitney's collection has for its subject an elephant who met with a different end (VICTORIA CRVENTA).<sup>1</sup> Stung by a snake,

. . . doune he sinkes, and on the serpente falles:  
Which creature huge, did fall uppon him soe,  
That by his deathe, he also kill'd his foe.

The death of Donne's elephant is equally Samsonic:

. . . Like a whole towne  
Cleane undermin'd, the slaine beast tumbled downe;  
With him the murtherer dies, . . .  
And thus he made his foe, his prey, and tombe . . .<sup>2</sup>

Donne refers to the fable once more in the *Devotions*: ' . . . how great an *Elephant*, how small a *Mouse* destroyes?'<sup>3</sup> The hunters and the snake in Whitney, just as the mouse in Donne, symbolize base and envious treachery capable of undermining a great and powerful prince.

#### IV

The best example of an indirect influence of emblematicism is the well-known and much-eulogized metaphor of the compass from 'A Valediction: forbidding mourning'. If lovers' souls are two at all, Donne says,

. . . they are two so  
As stiffe twin compasses are two,  
Thy soule the fixt foot, makes no show  
To move, but doth, if the'other doe.  
And though it in the center sit,  
Yet when the other far doth rome,  
It leanes, and hearkens after it,  
And growes erect, as that comes home.  
Such wilt thou be to mee, who must  
Like th'other foot, obliquely runne;  
Thy firmnes makes my circle just,  
And makes me end, where I begunne.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 195.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, ll. 394-6, 399, Grierson, vol. I, p. 311.

<sup>3</sup> 'Meditation 12', p. 285. Cf. also *Paradoxes, &c.*, London, 1652, p. 56; *Fifty Sermons*, xl, p. 372.

<sup>4</sup> Ll. 25-36, Grierson, vol. I, pp. 50-1.

One could hardly desire a metaphor which would better fulfil all the strictest requirements of emblem writing. An almost mechanical precision in juxtaposition with the sentiment underlines the unwonted tenderness of the poem. The metaphor is entirely visual and immediately evokes a single and simple image which stands for a moral quality: constancy. The last couplet serves, as it were, as motto to the emblem. Professor Grierson says on this subject, not without irony: 'Donne's famous simile has a close parallel in Omar Khayyam. Whether Donne's "hydroptic immoderate thirst of human learning and languages" extended to Persian I do not know.'<sup>1</sup> We need not, however, go quite as far. Already in the early sixteenth century the compass can be found as a symbol of prudence and constancy.<sup>2</sup> Picinelli recommends the compass as a symbol of active and contemplative life with the motto *VNO IMMOTO*,<sup>3</sup> and refers to a madrigal of the Cavaliere Giambattista Guarini which, under the title 'Risposta dell'amante', contains the reassuring answer of a lover departing for foreign countries to his mistress's fears that he might forsake her, expressed in the preceding madrigal:

Con voi sempre son io  
 Agitato ma fermo;  
 E se'l meno v'involò, il più vi lasso.  
 Son simile al compasso,  
 Ch'un piede in voi quasi mio centro i' fermo,  
 L'altro patisce di . . . i giri,  
 Ma non può far, che'ntorno à voi non giri.<sup>4</sup>

Donne's simile is perhaps better poetry: it has more feeling and is less formal; but the theme, the farewell of a parting lover, is identical, even the same words are used. Though, of course, a case of independent parallelism cannot be entirely ruled out, all circumstances seem to point to the fact that Donne knew the passage and that all he did was slightly to enlarge Guarini's madrigal.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Grierson, vol. II, p. 41.

<sup>2</sup> Louise of Savoy, mother of Francis I, is portrayed in a miniature (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, MS. franç., 12247) with a large compass in her left hand. See Volkmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 61-2, fig. 56.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, LXXI, vii, p. 754.

<sup>4</sup> *Rime*, Venice, 1598, Madrigali, xcvi, p. 106.

<sup>5</sup> The date of Donne's travels remains a matter of conjecture. Walton, usually not too reliable, says Donne had travelled for 'some years', first in Italy and later in Spain, after the Island Expedition, that is to say, after October 1597. (See *ed. cit.*, 'The Life of Dr. John Donne', p. 16.) If this is true he would have arrived in Italy just in time for the publication of Guarini's *Rime*. The modern view, however, places the date of Donne's Continental tour between the years 1592 and 1596 (see E. Gosse, *Life and Letters of John Donne*, 1899, vol. I, pp. 55-6) or, more accurately, from November or December 1594 to June 1596, before the expeditions to Cadiz and the Azores. (See J. Sparrow, 'The Date of Donne's Travels' in *A Garland for John Donne*, Harvard, 1931.)

It is quite possible that Guarini's madrigal was widely circulated in Italian literary circles and that Donne frequented such society. Guarini, born in 1538, was already

Guarini's simile of the compass is only one of the emblematic images in which his poetry abounds. It is impossible to say by which emblem book he was inspired, but it is highly probable that he took it from the typographic ensign of the Antwerp printer Christopher Plantin, who printed nearly thirty emblem books in his lifetime, and whose shop, the *Officina Plantiana*, continued to be the chief source of emblematic literature well into the seventeenth century. His emblem, known to all scholars of the time, depicts a hand striking a circle with a compass, with the motto *LABORE ET CONSTANTIA*. It occurs in Picinelli immediately after the quotation from Guarini.

Donne must have been aware of the neat effect of the simile, for he repeats it several times:

O Soule, O circle, why so quickly bee,  
Thy ends, thy birth and death, clos'd up in thee?  
Since one foot of thy compasse still was plac'd  
In heav'n, the other might securely have pac'd  
In the most large extent, through every path,  
Which the whole world, or man the abridgment hath.<sup>1</sup>

The distance between profane and spiritual poetry is very small indeed in Donne and there is no difference of poetical technique. Any amatory image may be promoted into the realm of abstract notions. The compass recurs in Donne's prose, a further development of the image from his poetry:

As hee that would describe a *circle* in paper, if hee have brought that *circle* within one *inch* of finishing, yet if he remove his *compasse*, he cannot make it up a perfit circle, except he fall to worke againe, to finde out the same *center*; so, though setting that *foot* of my *compasse* upon *thee*, I have gone so farre, as to the *consideration* of my selfe, yet if I depart from *thee*, my *center*, all is unperfit.<sup>2</sup>

As in the 'Obsequies to the Lord Harrington', God is the centre of human

reaching the summit of his fame in the last decade of the cinquecento. His lyrical play *Il Pastor Fido* was published in 1589, but it had been finished in 1583. It was translated into English in 1602. (Dymock (?), *Pastor Fido: or The faithfull Shepheard*, London.) Guarini, a courtier of the house of Este, defender of the tragicomedy against the Aristotelians, was the parent of Italian Baroque poetry and the teacher of G. B. Marini. He wrote in a sophisticated style courtly, witty and sweet verse, but without Marini's capriciousness and occasional mawkishness. (Cf. V. Rosso, *B. Guarini ed Il Pastor Fido*, Turin, 1886.)

Donne's 'Valediction', like its companion song 'Sweetest love I do not go', had probably been addressed to his wife; it was not written until Donne's journey to France in 1612, the year of Guarini's death. (See Grierson, vol. II, p. 40.) Therefore Donne might have made acquaintance with Guarini's verse through Sir Henry Wotton, who was ambassador to Venice from 1604, and probably kept him informed of foreign literary novelties. Whatever the truth may be, there is little reason to doubt that Donne was familiar with the work of one of the most fashionable writers of his day, 'that wise knight, . . . whom learned Italy accounts one of her ornaments'. (Walton, *ed. cit.*, 'Life of Sir Henry Wotton', p. 11.)

<sup>1</sup> 'Obsequies to the Lord Harrington', ll. 105-10, Grierson, vol. I, p. 274.

<sup>2</sup> *Devotions*, Expostulation 20, pp. 525-6.

life; only from it can be described a perfect circle of human actions from birth to death. Donne has journeyed far from the self-centredness of the Renaissance man to the renewed God-centredness akin to the heliocentric system of Copernicus, which, though regarded by contemporaries as revolutionary and sacrilegious, was well in accordance with the general absolutist and deterministic tendencies of the age:

The *Body* of Man was the first point that the foot of Gods Compass was upon: First, he created the body of *Adam*: and then he carries his Compass round, and shuts up where he began, he ends with *Body of man* againe in the glorification thereof in the Resurrection.<sup>1</sup>

As every diameter must pass through the centre, so all human deeds should tend towards God, who alone can wield the compass.

How emblematic an image it is, and how congenial Baroque imagery may be, are exemplified by another instance of its use. G. Hesius, a Belgian Jesuit, undoubtedly without any knowledge of Donne's writings, following probably Guarini's amatory poem, converted it into an edifying spiritual emblem according to the favourite practice of his order: a cherub with butterfly's winglets, exuberantly Baroque like one of Rubens's angels, a sanctified Cupid, is striking a circle with a huge compass. The motto declares: STANS VNO CAPIT OMNIA PVNCTO. Two Latin poems and a piece of prose attached to the picture expound at great length the same truth as Donne:

Ut capiat, quidquid circū iacet; ambulet uno,  
Uno sed constans hæreat ille pede.  
Stet summo pede, stet puncto defixus in uno,  
Nec dubium, pavidè torqueat inde latus.  
Sic constans stabilisque suum se flectet in orbem,  
Consimilem cælo, consimilemque Deo.  
Tanti est in medio fixum consistere puncto,  
Tanti est immotum tenere pedem, &c.

The Latin prose reads almost as a free translation from Donne:

Hominis animum stabili suâ voluntate fideliter fixum debere consistere in Deo puncto illo rerum omnium medio, individuo & immenso, ut intellectu tandem suo, omnia in orbem etiam longiasimè à se posita sine varietate vel errore concludat.<sup>2</sup>

The metaphor of the compass is often connected with the image of the circle which it naturally evokes. Judging by the extraordinary frequency and persistence of its application, it can perhaps be called Donne's most typical image, which becomes, at times, a veritable obsession. In his later

<sup>1</sup> *Fifty Sermons*, i, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Emblemata Sacra de Fide, Spe, Charitate*, Antwerp, 1636, embl. 38, p. 128. Cf. also C-F. Menestrier, *La Science et l'Art des Devises*, Paris, 1686, Devises sacrées, device 62, p. 257; 'Un compas couché sur un cercle achevé. PES HIC STETIT IN DIRECTO. Ps. 25'.

writings the emblem of the circle, 'one of the most convenient Hieroglyphicks of God',<sup>1</sup> gave him inspiration for a typically Baroque pseudo-philosophy.

The preceding evidence of Donne's emblematic bias will put into the right perspective the well-known fact that he designed his own impresa and wrote an explanatory Latin poem to accompany the seal sent to George Herbert.<sup>2</sup> We have his own translation of the 'soul' of the emblem.

The emblematic practice played an important part in the creative process of Donne's mind, and, as should be seen, it made a not negligible contribution to his imagery.

<sup>1</sup> *LXXX Sermons*, ii, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> The emblem delineated Christ nailed to an anchor taking the place of the cross. It was described by Walton. (See Grierson, vol. II, p. 261.)



## ROCHESTER OR FISHBOURNE: A QUESTION OF AUTHORSHIP

By RODNEY M. BAINE

Among the problems of disputed authorship, that of the Restoration farce *Sodom* is one of the most vexed. During the last two decades the evidence for Rochester's authorship has been clearly presented by Mr. Johannes Prinz and Mr. Montague Summers.<sup>1</sup> But the minority who doubt that Rochester wrote the play have not argued their case so forcibly, largely because the only alternative they have offered, a John Fishbourne, has remained for two centuries 'a totally obscure person from whose pen otherwise not a single line has come down to us'.<sup>2</sup> Surely before Rochester is damned with *Sodom* contemporary evidence for its authorship must be carefully re-examined and some facts must be made accessible about the life and artistry of Fishbourne.

The ascription of *Sodom* to Rochester rests almost entirely upon some of its nameless transcribers and the publishers who printed it surreptitiously. No one could seriously maintain that in the funeral sermon delivered over Rochester's body, his curate was ironically punning: 'He was . . . diligent and industrious to recommend and propagate [his sins] . . . like those . . . who declare their sin as *Sodom*.'<sup>3</sup> For no record has been adduced that Rochester ever mentioned the play, and such a pun would have been in execrable taste at the service.<sup>4</sup> The earliest writer yet named who positively assigned the play to Rochester was Zacharias Conrad von Uffenbach, a German bibliophile who visited England in 1710; and the earliest English writer yet named was Alexander Smith, who in 1716

<sup>1</sup> Johannes Prinz, *John Wilmot*, Leipzig, 1927, pp. 82-3, 166-77; and Montague Summers, *The Playhouse of Pepys*, London, Kegan Paul, 1935, pp. 296-8, 331-2. In his 'Nonesuch' edition of Otway, *Works*, 1926, pp. 307-10, Mr. Summers was less certain. *Sodom* is also attributed to Rochester by Sidney Lee (*D.N.B.*, vol. LXVII, p. 67), Charles Whibley (*C.H.E.L.*, vol. VIII, p. 445), and *C.B.E.L.* John Hayward (Rochester, *Works*, 'Nonesuch' ed., 1926) opposes Rochester and seems to favour Fishbourne. So does J. C. Ghosh (Thomas Otway, *Works*, 1932, vol. II, pp. 523-4). V. de Sola Pinto, *Rochester*, 1935, p. ix, thinks it highly improbable that Rochester was the author.

<sup>2</sup> Prinz, p. 176. Neither Hayward nor Ghosh could offer any new information about Fishbourne.

<sup>3</sup> Robert Parsons, *A Sermon Preached at the Funeral of the Rt. Honorable John Earl of Rochester*, Oxford, 1680, p. 9.

<sup>4</sup> 'On the Author of a Play called *Sodom*', printed in the 1680 'Antwerp' editions, was shown to be Oldham's in *T.L.S.*, 9 May 1935, by Harold Brooks, and earlier, by Percy L. Babington, in *M.L.R.* for January 1918.

quoted from 'the Earl of Rochester's prophane Play of Sodom.'<sup>1</sup> Although Henrich Muhl is said to have ascribed the play to Rochester<sup>2</sup> in an unlocated *Dissertatio de Poetis Episcopis*, p. 48, yet Muhl published as much after 1710 as before and may well have owed his information to Uffenbach. It seems doubtful that any one of these three men, two foreigners and a disreputable hack, could base his ascription upon reliable information.

Nor is the evidence of nameless transcribers more trustworthy. It has not yet been established that the play was anonymously ascribed to Rochester before about 1689, for it is unsafe to accept as proof of an actual edition the title page of the Hamburg MS.—'Antwerp. Printed in the year 1684'.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, it is not certain that Richard Heber's printed copy and the one which Sir Edmund Gosse saw in his youth were dated 1684 and ascribed to Rochester.<sup>4</sup> In 1689, however, some of the manuscripts of *Sodom* were evidently assigning the play to him, for according to Charles Gildon, its printer wanted 'to have it pass for one of the works of the Earl of Rochester, as it had been formerly imputed to him'.<sup>5</sup> The Rochester tradition was then probably disseminated in that year by Benjamin Crayle and Joseph Streater, when they published 'a notorious bawdy book, entitled a play called "Sodom or the Quintessence of Debauchery"'.<sup>6</sup> In 1691 or 1692, finally, Anthony à Wood wrote:

The Reader is to know also that a most wretched and obscene and scandalously infamous Play, not wholly compleated, passed some hands privately in MS., under the name of *Sodom*, and fathered upon the Earl (as most of this kind were, right or wrong, which came out at any time, after he had once obtained the name of an excellent smooth, but withall a most lewd Poet) as the true author of it.<sup>7</sup>

Wood, then, was more than sceptical, and well he might be, for the reliable evidence tends to exculpate Rochester. John Oldham, Rochester's

<sup>1</sup> Z. C. von Uffenbach, *Merckwürdige Reisen durch Niedersachsen, Holland, und Engelland*, Dritter Theil, Ulm, 1754, pp. 200-1, and Alexander Smith, *School of Venus*, 1716, vol. 1, p. 245. Uffenbach discussed the play under the date 21 October 1710.

<sup>2</sup> August Beyer, *Memoriae Historico-Criticae Librorum Rariorum*, Dresden, 1734, pp. 150-1. It is not apparent that Muhl ever visited England.

<sup>3</sup> The British Museum MS., with its 'E. of R.' on the title page, has not been exactly dated. The play was attributed to Rochester in a French prose version supposedly written in 1682, but the only known copy was written in a script placed at the beginning of the eighteenth century. (Prinz, p. 397, citing *Bibliothèque de Soleinne*, No. 3836.) This manuscript has been destroyed.

<sup>4</sup> Heber's executors are commonly said to have destroyed a copy. For the copy seen by Gosse, see *T.L.S.*, 16 October 1930, p. 831, and Summers, *Playhouse of Pepys*, p. 296.

<sup>5</sup> Charles Gildon, *Lives and Characters of the English Dramatick Poets*, 1699, p. 56.

<sup>6</sup> Charles R. Rivington, 'Notes on the Stationers' Company', in *The Library*, N.S., vol. iv (1903), p. 366. Mr. Rivington records that the messenger of the press was instructed to prosecute the publishers at the expense of the Company. The case may have been tried when Crayle, along with other printers, was summoned to appear before the Earl of Shrewsbury on 11 February 1690. *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic*, 13 February 1689-April 1690, citing *H.O. Warrant Book*, vol. v, p. 67.

<sup>7</sup> Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses*, 1692, vol. ii, p. 490.

protégé, railed abusively at the author of *Sodom*, but highly praised his patron in *Bion*, a *Pastoral Bewailing the Death of the Earl of Rochester*. More conclusively, in his *Complaint*, published about February 1680, Otway clearly distinguished Rochester from the author of *Sodom*:

The first was he who stunk of that rank Verse  
In which he wrote his *Sodom* Farce;  
A wretch whom old Diseases did so bite,  
That he writ Bawdy sure in spight. . . .

Then next there follow'd, to make up the throng,  
*Lord Lampoon*, and *Monsieur Song*.<sup>1</sup>

Despite this contemporary evidence, nevertheless, and Gildon's rejection of the Rochester tradition in 1698, Prinz has maintained: 'There is little hope of contesting Rochester's authorship successfully, as long as no acceptable suggestion can be offered as to who the poet was on whom this strange honour is to be bestowed.'<sup>2</sup>

The only other candidate for the honour of writing *Sodom* is 'one Mr. Fishbourne'. In 1698 Charles Gildon designated as the author a gentleman, 'who was, as I'm very well assured, one Mr. *Fishbourn*, an Inns of Court Gentleman'.<sup>3</sup> This ascription carries a good deal of weight. Gildon had edited Rochester's poems and his letters and had easy access to reliable sources of information. His information about Restoration dramatists is usually accurate and is generally accepted by authorities on the period. His identification, moreover, was accepted by all the eighteenth-century dramatic histories and handbooks, by Giles Jacob in 1719,<sup>4</sup> and by subsequent editors of Rochester's *Poems*. Unfortunately no information about Fishbourne has been added except Whincop's particularization, evidently incorrect, of 'one of the Inns of Court' as Gray's Inn,<sup>5</sup> the nineteenth-century and probably fallacious addition of Fishbourne's Christian name—John, and Mr. Montague Summers' mistaken pronouncement: 'The extant poems by Fishbourne are of an entirely unexceptionable character.'<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Otway, *The Poet's Complaint of his Muse*, Stanza 8. In *The Tory-Poets, a Satyr*, Thomas Shadwell attacked Otway's plays as 'Worse than a Sodoms Farce or Smithfield Droll' (Shadwell, *Works*, ed. M. Summers, 1927, vol. v, p. 284). No *Smithfield Drollery* seems to be recorded, for it is not listed in Courtney Craig Smith's excellent *Seventeenth-Century Drolleries*, 1943, an unpublished Harvard Ph.D. dissertation. But 'Smithfield' is possibly not intended to refer to a specific drollery. One might mention here that in his *Stinking Fish*, 1708, p. 79, John Dunton confessed or claimed to have written:

(1) Pulpit Fool, (2) The Rump, (or Tunbridge Ode)  
(3) Sir Courtly (4) *Sodom*, (or He-Strumpets Club).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Prinz, p. 176.

<sup>3</sup> Gildon, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

<sup>4</sup> Giles Jacob, *Poetical Register*, 1719, vol. 1, p. 101.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas Whincop (d. 1730), *Scanderberg*, 1747, p. 236.

<sup>6</sup> Summers, *op. cit.*, p. 332. Mr. Summers has quite incorrectly credited Gildon with attributing *Sodom* to a John Fishbourne (as has also Prinz) and has evidently made the mistake of confusing John and Christopher.

The Fishbourne,<sup>1</sup> gentleman, can be identified with reasonable assurance. He was probably Christopher Fishbourne, son of Richard Fishbourne of New Windsor, Berks. The grandfather, John Fishbourne, a descendant of the Durham Fishbournes, was a vintner in London, where he died in 1656 or 1657. His wife, who lived in the parish of St. Clement Danes, died in 1660.<sup>2</sup> The father, Richard, was born in 1619 or 1620, and matriculated at Magdalen College, Oxford, 27 May 1636.<sup>3</sup> He probably left without a degree, and on 22 February 1640/1 he was admitted at Gray's Inn.<sup>4</sup> In 1649 he was present in St. George's Chapel, Windsor, when the body of Charles I was privately interred. He entered the vault, observed that 'it was some Difficulty to get into [*sic*] the King's Coffin by the side of the others',<sup>5</sup> and brought away part of Henry VIII's pall. Fishbourne, one trusts, was not the unnamed foot-soldier who crept into the vault while Charles' coffin was being prepared for interment, cut off as much of Henry's pall as he thought would escape unnoticed, wimble a hole through Henry's coffin and selected a bone appropriate to haft a knife with.<sup>6</sup> Richard Fishbourne married Katherine, daughter of Christopher Wren, Dean of Windsor, and had four sons, John, Christopher, Richard, and William, and three daughters, Mary, Katherine, and Anne. John, the heir, matriculated at Trinity College, Oxford, 16 December 1664, when he was sixteen, but evidently left without taking a degree. No record has been discovered, however, that he entered one of the Inns of Court or wrote any extant poetry, though he may well have done both.

The more likely Fishbourne is the second son, Christopher, namesake of Dean Christopher Wren and the great architect, his uncle. On 26 February 1678 he was commissioned an Ensign in Sir Henry Goodrick's Regiment of foot, served in Flanders during that year, and was presumably mustered out in the following March. Some of his superior officers were Lieutenant

<sup>1</sup> Spellings include Fishbourne, Fishbourn, Fishburne, Fishborne, Fishburn, Fisburn, and earlier, de Fissheburn. 'Fishburn' better approximates the contemporary pronunciation, but I have regularized to accord with the normal family spelling.

<sup>2</sup> *Wills in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury*. John Fishbourne, vintner, 1656, fol. 220 and 1657, fol. 239. Of Grace, his widow, St. Clement Danes, 1660, fol. 212.

<sup>3</sup> He was then seventeen. On 30 March 1665 his age was mistakenly recorded, or it was later misread, as sixty. *Visitation of Berkshire*, Harleian Society, vol. LVI (1907), p. 206. It is correctly given as 45 in *The Genealogist*, vol. v, p. 258.

<sup>4</sup> The name printed in the *Admission Book* is Robert, but he is recorded as son and heir of John Fishbourne, gentleman, of Winesword, Berks., a misreading of one of the common seventeenth century spellings, Wyndesore or Wyndsore. In the *Visitations of Berkshire and Middlesex* only one son, Richard, is listed.

<sup>5</sup> Christopher Wren, *Parentalia*, 1750, p. 330.

<sup>6</sup> On 16 August 1659, £100 was allocated 'for drums, haliberts, and colours of Col. Fishbourne's regiment of foot, and for payment of the marshal and drummer' (*Calendar of State Papers, Domestic*). This might be a mistake for Col. Tichborne, but Richard's great uncle had been a sea captain and commander in Queen Elizabeth's time. (*The Genealogist*, vol. v (1881), p. 323.)

Col. John Rumsey; Major William Lesley; Captain Thomas Fairfax; Captain Jonathan Jennings, son of Sir Edmund; Captain Symond Pack, son of Sir Christopher; and Ensign John Goodrick.<sup>1</sup> The *Sodom* farce, it should be noted, contains a good deal of military characters and atmosphere,<sup>2</sup> much more than one would expect from Rochester, whose only military experience was acquired in naval campaigns of 1665 and 1666. When Fishbourne sailed from Flanders he may well have left behind him a copy of an unfinished farce, *Sodom*.<sup>3</sup> Less than a year later its author was being vituperated by Oldham and Otway, who had been an officer in the same campaign and may well have met Fishbourne in Flanders. Oldham advised the author to swear allegiance to his *Succubus* Muse: 'Without Press Money, be its Volunteer.' Applied to Rochester the metaphor is meaningless; it carries significance only if the author of *Sodom* had been concerned, as had Fishbourne, in the campaign of 1678-9, in which press money was first provided, in the shape of twenty shillings per man.

But a few years later, Fishbourne scored a signal triumph when on 22 November 1683, his ode for St. Cecilia's Day, set to music by Henry Purcell, was selected to initiate a distinguished annual celebration:

Welcom to all the Pleasures that delight,  
Of ev'ry Sense the grateful Appetite.<sup>4</sup>

Oldham died a few weeks later, almost a year before his *Ode for an Anniversary of Music on St. Cecilia's Day*, set by John Blow, was similarly honoured.

The performance and the publication in 1684 of his St. Cecilia's Ode led immediately to the inclusion of eight songs by Christopher Fishbourne in Playford's *Choice Ayres and Songs*: 'Beneath a Dark and Melancholy Grove', 'Tell me no More of Flames in Love', 'Pretty Floramel, no Tongue can Ever Tell', 'In the Shade, upon the Grass', 'Wealth Breeds

<sup>1</sup> *English Army Lists and Commission Registers*, ed. Charles Dalton, vol. 1 (1892), p. 219.

<sup>2</sup> In *Sodom* the Monarch's courtiers are the 'General of the Army'; the 'Prince Collonel and Favourite of the King'; and the '... Master-general'. The atmosphere of a military campaign is especially strong in Act IV.

<sup>3</sup> At the Hague is, or was, a copy lacking all the preliminaries and Act v. Of course it may be mutilated, or the transcriber may have skipped the preliminaries and not finished his task; but the above theory is not impossible. A knowledge of the provenance and state of the preservation of the 'Hague' copy might well settle the question of authorship once and for all. Anthony à Wood, one remembers, said the play was not wholly completed.

<sup>4</sup> [Christopher Fishbourne], *A Musical Entertainment Perform'd on November 22, 1683*, J. Playford, Jr. 1684. It was reprinted, with caustic comments, in Malone's *Life of Dryden*. As long ago as 1857, William H. Husk, in *An Account of the Musical Celebration on St. Cecilia's Day*, p. 13, mentioned Christopher Fishbourne's St. Cecilia's Day Ode, songs in Playford *Choice Ayres and Wit and Mirth*, and 'Langbaine's' and Genest's accounts of Fishbourne. Husk's brief account of Fishbourne is evidently the first and hitherto only identification of the author of *Sodom* as Christopher Fishbourne.



Care; Love, Hope and Fear', 'Long had Damon been Admir'd', 'Though Fortune and Love may be Deities still', and 'Why am I the Only Creature, Must a Ruin'd Love Pursue'.<sup>1</sup> Six of these were reprinted in *Wit and Mirth: or Pills to Purge Melancholy*, and included also was 'A Sad and lamentable Account of an Unhappy Accident that befel a young Gentleman, by a Fall from his Horse, whereby he most dangerously hurt his Nose and Chin. The words by Mr Fishburn'.<sup>2</sup> All of these songs are entirely unexceptionable, as may be also the Fishbourne piece in B.M. Add. MS. 29397 and the catch ascribed to Fishbourne in B.M. Add. MS. 19759 (c. 1685) and printed in 1685 in *Catch that Catch Can*.<sup>3</sup> However, among the Rochester poems in a commonplace book in the Harvard Library is an obscene poem by 'Fisborne'.<sup>4</sup> Though it seems to begin innocently, 'Why should soe much beauty dread', the poem is quite unprintable here. Since the collection has been dated 1675-1682, the poems of Rochester and Fishbourne were being mixed up quite early.

Thus the reliable evidence seems to point away from Rochester to Fishbourne, probably Christopher, nephew of Sir Christopher Wren, author of the first St. Cecilia's Day Ode, of several published songs and catches, of at least one obscene poem, and probably—*Sodom*.

<sup>1</sup> *Choice Ayres and Songs Composed by Several Gentlemen of the King's Music and Others*, Fifth Book, John Playford, Jr., 1684, pp. 2-3, 5, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 28. 'Tell me no More of Flames in Love', arranged for harpsichord, copied in the hand of Sir William Blakeston, and unascibed, is in B.M. Add. Mss. 17853, ff. 22, 35<sup>b</sup>-53.

<sup>2</sup> The first line is 'Come listen good people the whilst I relate'. It occupied pp. 21-3 of the 1700 edition and was reprinted in D'Urfey, *Wit and Mirth*, 1719, vol. IV, pp. 15-16. All the songs 'Set by Mr. Fishbourne' are in vol. V, pp. 158-9, 159-60, 165-6, 183-4, 184-5, and 186-7.

<sup>3</sup> Purcell, *Works*, Novello, vol. XXII (*Catches, Rounds*), 1922, p. xx. It is generally anonymous, though it is ascribed to John Blow in B.M. Add. MS. 22099 and to Purcell in *The Pleasant Musical Companion*, 10th edition, cir. 1740. The words of the usual version, 'Fie, na Prithce John', are not Fishbourne's. The Catalogue of B.M. Add. MSS. notes that on No. 19759 is written 'Charles Campelman his book, June y<sup>e</sup> 9, 1681'.

<sup>4</sup> MS. Eng. 636 F, p. 76.

## HENRY JAMES AND THE ART OF FORESHORTENING

By MORRIS ROBERTS

Henry James's prefaces describe an art of economy, which gives the sense without the body of experience and is the economy of poetry and drama. The late novels are full of both, and it is in part the reason why they are difficult. One sees the process at work in James's revisions, which he describes as the brightening of a faded surface and the bringing of the old matter to life. How this animation is attempted appears in the following passage from *The American* (Chap. xi):

Her reflexions, at any rate, were disturbed by the advent of Newman and his companion. She glanced at them quickly, and then, colouring a little rose and stood beside her easel.

which becomes in the definitive edition:

Her reflexions, at any rate, were disturbed by the advent of her unannounced visitors, whom, as she rose and stood beside her easel, she greeted with a precipitation of eye and lip that was like the glad clap of a pair of hands.

If we compare this with a sentence from *What Maisie Knew* (Chap. xx) where the same intention is carried out much more thoroughly, we shall see why James is hard reading. Maisie comes home in a cab very late at night, clutching the money pressed into her hand by her father's mistress, for cab-fare, at the moment of parting; and is met in the hall by the maid.

The money was far too much even for a fee in a fairy-tale, and in the absence of Mrs. Beale, who, though the hour was now late, had not yet returned to the Regent's Park, Susan Ash, in the hall, as loud as Maisie was low, and as bold as she was bland, produced, on the exhibition offered under the dim vigil of the lamp that made the place a contrast to the child's recent scene of light, the half-crown that an unsophisticated cabman could pronounce to be the least he would take.

In both these sentences, though of course much more fully in the second, a small incident is animated or 'dramatized', that is, not merely recorded but shown as happening, without being expanded into a scene and dialogue. Yet all the elements of a scene are present in this closely packed sentence: place, sound, and movement, the three figures in the dimly lighted hall, the thought in Maisie's mind, the vigorous ill-humour of the

maid, awakened at that time of night, the comedy of the unsophisticated cabman. The effort in both passages, in the first chiefly by means of the simile, is to create movement, an impression of talk, and a centre of interest; in some sort the equivalent of drama.

This is the effort in James's late novels, where imagination is always at work, the moment always present and full, the story completely 'told'. It is governed by the 'law of entire expression', which creates more trouble for the reader than the subtlety of the matter. As a play is all action in the sense that all of it is acted out, without the author's intervention, so James's narrative is continuous, and is never interrupted by the mere statement that something has happened. The story may be very quiet and undramatic, but it is always fully 'dramatized'. Two things follow from this: there are no decorative or moralizing digressions in James, and there is always a necessity of 'foreshortening', of giving the sense of present action without an elaborated scene. The persistent imagery of the late stories is therefore never idle picture-making; the image casts a long shadow; it gathers up and concentrates; it may cut across the action of months and distil the essence of many pages of circumstantial detail, for it speaks straight to the imagination, like poetry; and at its best James's prose has the intensity, the deep intimations and the finality of poetry. It can be read again and again. Yet his care for verisimilitude is essentially the same as the realistic novelist's, and the imaginative splendour of his late stories is not the same thing as allegory or fable.

Thus James's image may express in a dozen words the whole sense of an occasion, without narrative or description or dialogue, as when the doctor in *The Wings of the Dove* receives Milly for the first time, having only ten minutes to give her, 'ten mere minutes which he yet placed at her service in a manner that she admired still more than she could meet it: so crystal-clean the great empty cup of attention that he set between them on the table'. The elaborate simile in *The Golden Bowl* that describes Maggie's contemplation of her husband's love-affair gathers up the experience of months; it is the 'fusion and synthesis of picture', picture being the opposite of scene or dialogue; the essential meaning of an event embodied in an unforgettable image.

This situation had been occupying for months and months the very centre of the garden of her life, but it had reared itself there like some strange tall tower of ivory, or perhaps rather some wonderful beautiful but outlandish pagoda, a structure plated with hard bright porcelain, coloured and figured and adorned at the over-hanging eaves with silver bells that tinkled ever so charmingly when stirred by chance airs. She had walked round and round it—that was what she felt; she had carried on her existence in the space left her for circulation, a space that sometimes seemed ample and sometimes narrow: looking up all the while at the fair structure that spread itself so amply

and rose so high, but never quite making out as yet where she might have entered had she wished. She hadn't wished till now—such was the odd case; and what was doubtless equally odd besides was that though her raised eyes seemed to distinguish places that must serve from within, and especially far aloft, as apertures and outlooks, no door appeared to give access from her convenient garden level. The great decorated surface had remained consistently impenetrable and inscrutable. At present however, to her considering mind, it was as if she had ceased merely to circle and to scan the elevation, ceased so vaguely, so quite helplessly to stare and wonder: she had caught herself distinctly in the act of pausing, then in that of lingering, and finally in that of stepping unprecedentedly near. The thing might have been, by the distance at which it kept her, a Mahometan mosque, with which no base heretic could take a liberty; there so hung about it the vision of one's putting off one's shoes to enter and even verily of one's paying with one's life if found there as an interloper. She hadn't certainly arrived at the conception of paying with her life for anything she might do; but it was nevertheless quite as if she had sounded with a tap or two one of the rare porcelain plates. She had knocked in short—though she could scarce have said whether for admission or for what; she had applied her hand to a cool smooth spot and had waited to see what would happen. Something *had* happened; it was as if a sound, at her touch, after a little, had come back to her from within; a sound sufficiently suggesting that her approach had been noted.

Beautiful as this is it is no purple passage, but story, alive with suspense, pathos, and irony. The 'silver bells that tinkled ever so charmingly' is for example not a mere decorative touch but an aspect of the Prince's affair; there is indeed no detail in the passage that is not a cue for the imagination; and if the reader at this point in the novel finds himself merely contemplating an elaborate and beautiful metaphor and waiting for something to happen the fault is not James's.

The demands of drama, that is of uninterrupted action, bring about a peculiar handling of time in the late novels. There are intentional ambiguities and discrepancies in them; there are two kinds of time, two clocks, dramatic and real, as in Shakespeare and other dramatists, but rarely if ever in the novel. In the preface to *Roderick Hudson* (written of course long after the story) James speaks of the 'eternal time-question' as being always formidable, since verisimilitude may require the effect of a long lapse of time, whereas art always demands compression. *Roderick Hudson*, for example, is implausible because the hero's deterioration seems far too sudden, and seeing this when he came to revise the story James introduced a bit of dramatic time in one passage, by substituting for the word 'year', the correct interval, the phrase 'the many revolving seasons', which suggests a good deal more than a year. In the late stories this art of deception, of 'ambiguity of appearance without ambiguity of sense', is developed to the last degree. A good example is the interval between Books II and III in *The Golden Bowl*; another is the climax of the novel (Book V),

where James, having made his usual mistake of over-preparing and leaving too little space for his climax, alludes generously to months and weeks when it is really a question of days. An impression of prolonged strain that wears Maggie out is thus produced, in spite of the fact that the period is short and the amount of action directly presented small.

James's use of dramatic time may be examined in his handling of the interval between Books II and III of *The Golden Bowl*, where the action is the love-affair of Charlotte and the Prince. When Book III opens the affair is supposed to have been going on or preparing for some time. Book II ends with Charlotte's engagement to Maggie's father. In the interval, then, between the two books Charlotte has married, spent many months of a honeymoon in America, returned to England and lived for some time in close proximity to Maggie and the Prince. During her honeymoon in America she and the prince have been separated, and so it is only after her return to England or Europe that the affair can have developed or been resumed, and it has had to develop slowly so as to lend colour to her contention that it is all a result of Maggie's prolonged neglect of her husband and of Mr. Verver's neglect of *his* partner. Besides, Maggie's realization of what is going on is slow and gradual, as may be seen from the passage quoted above. This, then, is what must have happened between Books II and III, and it is related in Book III, that is, woven into the story of the events of that book, 'pieced on', fused and synthesized; but the time in which it happened is a very elusive quantity, being sometimes two years or more, which is almost if not quite enough, and at other times only a little more than a year, which is certainly not enough. Which interval is to play its part in the illusion of the moment depends on how far James thinks he can go in sacrificing verisimilitude to liveliness. He has to achieve the sense of duration without allowing any gaps in the story to appear, to reconcile the opposing claims of verisimilitude and continuity of action. The time is elastic because it is never present time; the events that have happened in it are never directly presented. In a play such off-stage events are the subject of narrative, more or less openly; in James's novels they are the subject-matter of synthesis and fusion, as will be seen in a passage to be cited shortly. It would perhaps be more true to say that the time in which events happen off-stage is non-existent, that they happen in no time at all; and sometimes the dramatist takes pains to conceal the discrepancy, as for example in *Othello*; and sometimes he ignores verisimilitude altogether, as in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Act III, Scene i.

But the point is this: there is no 'eternal time-question' for the novelist unless he deliberately submits himself as far as possible to the conditions of drama, as James does in the late novels. For the novelist need not 'dramatize' his whole story. The time between Books II and III in *The*



*Golden Bowl* and the action belonging to it could have been disposed of in the first chapter of Book III, in simple narrative; and James would then have been under no necessity to make the interval seem shorter than it was: two years went by and this is what happened. Or he might have presented the story of these two years, or the more important part of it, dramatically, as present action, in an additional book. The first alternative would deprive the action of all dramatic value and would be mere reporting after the fact, the second would make the novel too long. The problem, therefore, was to make this part of the story dramatically interesting in the shortest possible space, to foreshorten, to give all the sense of it without all the substance. And in order to achieve the illusion of substance where there is only 'sense' it would be necessary to keep the reader from contemplating the empty period of two years between Books II and III; and the interval is accordingly surrounded with ambiguity and remains undefined. Further, a part of the foreshortened action, the beginning of the love affair (Book III, Chapters IV and V), has to be lifted out of its right place in the sequence of events, out of the empty interval where it belongs, and set down in the midst of a later stage in the story. And in this later stage (Books III and IV) the time indications are excessive, and in making them so the novelist's purpose was to offset the impression of huddled events and create an illusion of plausible development, without interrupting the continuous presentation or acting-out of the story, without so to speak ringing down the curtain. When, for example, at the beginning of Book IV, in the passage quoted above, Maggie thinks of her husband's love affair as having occupied the centre of her life for months and months, it is actually a matter of weeks, not months. All this is achieved without confusion and with perfect verisimilitude; the discrepancies appearing only on a painstaking analysis of the time relations in the novel.

Book III opens with the brilliant scene of the diplomatic reception at which the Prince and Charlotte appear together in public without wife or husband, and arouse the anxiety of Maggie's friend. The Prince and Charlotte are publicly paired. How has this happened? The question is answered in Chapters IV and V; first in a passage of dramatized narrative, 'picture', and then in a scene between the lovers, ending in a kiss, which appears to be the first time they have come to an open understanding. In the first passage, describing the development of the love affair, the part of the story mentioned above as belonging to the period between Books II and III, the subject-matter is foreshortened, summarized dramatically, producing as far as possible the impression of an immediate event.

It appeared thus that they might enjoy together extraordinary freedom, the two friends, from the moment they should understand their position aright. With the Prince himself, from an early stage, not unnaturally, Charlotte had made a

great point of their so understanding it; she had found frequent occasion to describe to him this necessity, and, her resignation tempered, or her intelligence at least quickened, by irrepressible irony, she applied at different times different names to the propriety of their case. The wonderful thing was that her sense of propriety had been from the first especially alive about it. There were hours when she spoke of their taking refuge in what she called the commonest tact—as if this principle alone would suffice to light their way; there were others when it might have seemed, to listen to her, that their course would demand of them the most anxious study and the most independent, not to say original, interpretation of signs. She talked now as if it were indicated at every turn by finger-posts of almost ridiculous prominence; she talked again as if it lurked in devious ways and were to be tracked through bush and briar; and she even on opportunity delivered herself in the sense that, as their situation was unprecedented, so their heaven was without stars. “‘Do’?” she once had echoed to him as the upshot of passages covertly, though briefly, occurring between them on her return. . . . “Isn’t the immense, the really quite matchless beauty of our position that we have to ‘do’ nothing in life at all?—nothing except the usual necessary everyday thing which consists in one’s not being more of a fool than one can help. . . . There has been plenty of ‘doing’, and there will doubtless be plenty still; but it’s all theirs, every inch of it; it’s all a matter of what they’ve done to us.” And she showed how the question had therefore been only of their taking everything as everything came, and all as quietly as might be. . . . She was to remember not a little meanwhile the particular prolonged silent look with which the Prince had met her allusion to these primary efforts at escape.

This is the counterpart of the description of Maggie’s anxiety about the affair and is in the same way a fusion of past events, Charlotte’s and the Prince’s story, from an early stage, of many meetings and much talk, implying a long development and a lapse of months. Anyone who has the patience may look for these months in the time-scheme of the novel and satisfy himself that they are not there. But the essential thing is that this summary of the past is almost as lively as a scene, hardly less so than the actual scene between the lovers which it prepares for and leads up to; the two together, picture and scene, past and present, forming an uninterrupted action. The passage of preparation is not a narrative of events so much as a distillation of their meaning; it is unlocalized and undated, it contains sense without substance, the taste of life, character, passion and irony, like the Prince’s prolonged silent look. And within its suggestive brevity and self-dependence lurk overtones of meaning, of the irony and ambiguity which are distinctive notes of evil in James.

There is ‘picture’ of another kind, the prolonged moment of reflection, of which James says, writing of a passage in *The Portrait of a Lady*:

Reduced to its essence, it is but the vigil of searching criticism; but it throws the action further forward than twenty “incidents” might have done. It

was designed to have all the vivacity of incident and all the economy of picture. . . . It is a representation simply of her motionlessly *seeing*, and an attempt withal to make the mere still lucidity of her act as "interesting" as the surprise of a caravan or the identification of a pirate.

The vivacity of incident and the economy of picture. There is, for example, the fateful hour in *The Golden Bowl* when Mr. Verver anxiously ponders the effect that his marrying again may have on the exceptional relation between him and his daughter, and finds his characteristic answer when he realizes that by marrying he will appear to be deserting Maggie and so save her the pang of feeling that she has deserted *him*, separation being inevitable in any case.

Before such a question, as before several others when they recurred, he would come to a pause, leaning his arms on the old parapet and losing himself in a far excursion. . . . What he kept finding himself return to, disturbingly enough, was the reflection, deeper than anything else, that in forming a new and intimate tie he should in a manner abandon, or at the best signally relegate, his daughter. He should reduce to definite form the idea that he had lost her—as was indeed inevitable—by her own marriage. . . . As at a turn of his labyrinth he saw his issue, which opened out so wide, for the minute, that he held his breath with wonder. He was afterwards to recall how just then the autumn night seemed to clear to a view in which the whole place, everything round him, the wide terrace where he stood, the others, with their steps, below, the gardens, the park, the lake, the circling woods, lay there under some strange midnight sun. It all met him during these instants as a vast expanse of *discovery*, a world that looked, so lighted, extraordinarily new, and in which familiar objects had taken on a distinctness that, as if it had been a loud, a spoken pretension to beauty, interest, importance, to he scarce knew what, gave them an inordinate quantity of character and verily an inordinate size. The hallucination, or whatever he might have called it, was brief, but it lasted long enough to leave him gasping. . . . He had these several days groped and groped for an object that lay at his feet and as to which his blindness came from his stupidly looking beyond. It had sat all the while at his hearthstone, whence it now gazed up in his face.

Once he had recognized it there everything became coherent. The sharp point to which all his light converged was that the whole call of his future to him as a father would be in his so managing that Maggie would less and less appear to herself to have foresaken him.

Mr. Verver had reason to recall this hour. It is crucial to the story and is wonderfully set off by the weight and splendour of the passage. The moment is dramatic in an obvious sense; Mr. Verver is facing a crisis and looking for an issue; his motionlessly seeing is indeed 'action', which carries the story forward, and nothing like internal monologue, which is quite foreign to James's art. Yet he is careful to maintain the sense of a present event unfolding before the reader in moments like this, and adheres scrupulously to his point of view as in the phrase, 'he was afterwards to recall', and in all kinds of subtle gradation in the use of verbs. It is not only

because he wants to keep himself out of the story and so achieve a more convincing illusion, a greater authority than the mere 'thin guarantee' of a story-teller, but because he wants drama and has to mark out a direction of interest. 'All the letters', says Richardson of *Clarissa*, 'are written while the hearts of the writers must be supposed to be wholly engaged in their subjects (the event at the time generally dubious): so that they abound not only with critical situations but with what may be called *instantaneous descriptions*'. It is this liveliness of drama as well as its 'rounded objectivity' that James has always in view.

This is clear in the big scenes, where the reader's understanding is guided by the hero's or heroine's troubled appraisal of affairs. One drawback in this is that the protagonist's point of view may prevail too far and turn scene into picture, into a meditative vigil; and instead of the opposition of independent figures, more or less on a level to the spectator's eye, we may have largely the inner drama of a mind, the scene failing thus altogether of the rounded objectivity of a scene in a play. A good example of the way James deals with the problem is the great scene in *The Golden Bowl* where Charlotte confronts Maggie, on the terrace of the great country-house, outside the lighted room where the two husbands and their guests are quietly playing cards; the discarded and baffled mistress and the wife she has wronged. And while the latter's insight prevails, of course, and her perceptions, so rich and exact and moving, are the fine gloss on her crisis, yet the figure of the other woman is not 'compromised'; heightened by Maggie's fear it is indeed bigger than life. We do not see to the bottom of Charlotte, here or anywhere else in the novel, but that is because evil has always an air of mystery for James, as of something sealed and unapproachable; as it is cut off from sympathy so it resists a full comprehension. The scene illustrates very well a scheme of objectivity, of drama, with a maximum of sense, an art of the novel as single-minded and un-failing as Flaubert's.

## NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

### THE 'FRISIAN SAILOR' PASSAGE IN THE OLD ENGLISH GNOMIC VERSES

Lines 94-106 of the *Gnomic Verses* in the Exeter Book are the famous passage which tells us how a Frisian sailor was welcomed back by his faithful wife: he is called into the house, his sea-stained clothing is washed, he is given a change for it, and the demands of his love-feelings are met. The moralizing poet goes on to urge fidelity in women, especially when the husband is away: sea-voyages are long, but the traveller should always be waited for.

A dear welcome guest [is one]  
To his Frisian wife when the ship comes to rest;  
Back are come her husband and his vessel,  
Her own provider, and she invites him in,  
Washes his sea-stained garment and gives him fresh clothes;  
She grants him on land what his love requires.  
Wife shall keep faith with husband—often she is defamed with evil.  
Many are constant in mind, many seek novelty—  
They love the stranger, when the other travels far away.  
The sailor is long on his journey, yet ever shall one look for the loved one,  
Wait for what he may not hasten; when again chance comes to him,  
He comes home if he be free from ill, if the ocean keep him not back,  
The sea hold in its grasp.<sup>1</sup>

Proper names are not common in the Old English *Gnomic Verses*. The only three others that occur are world-famous personalities who readily exemplify a particular theme, rather in the manner of the heroic personalities in *Deor*: thus, Woden is the embodiment of idolatry (132), and Cain, with Abel as his victim (193 ff.), is the primal murderer. In our context, the introduction of a precise localizing name 'Frisian' has been considered sufficiently explained by the widespread medieval reputation of the Frisians in matters of seamanship. They were certainly outstanding sailors in the days of King Alfred. The chronicler in the Parker Manuscript for the year 896 says that the king's new warships followed his own design and differed from the (traditional) Danish and Frisian models. For his

<sup>1</sup> Text in Blanche Colton Williams, *Gnomic Poetry in Anglo-Saxon*, New York, 1914; also W. S. Mackie, *The Exeter Book, Part II* (E.E.T.S.), London, 1934; George Philip Krapp and Elliot van Kirk Dobbie, *The Exeter Book (Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records, vol. III)*, New York, 1936.



subsequent sea-battle against the Danes in that year, the list of the king's casualties given includes three sailors, Wulfheard, Æbbe, and Æfelhere, specifically called Frisians.<sup>1</sup> From this it is assumed that a number of Frisian mercenaries were employed by the king in manning his new war-ships, and possibly the reference to Frisian models means that Alfred had before this hired their ships as well as their seamen. More in general, there is evidence that from the sixth century onwards Frisian ports ranked as centres of great importance for European trade.<sup>2</sup>

It is not so well evidenced that Frisian husbands and wives were outstanding in the fidelity of their relationships, though this the poet equally well implies by his use of the tribal name. A modern editor<sup>3</sup> speaks of the 'evidently notable domestic felicity of that particular tribe' on the basis of a passage in Tacitus' *Annals* (iv, 72). Tacitus, who is incidentally a rather distant witness for the period of Old English poetry, is telling us of a revolt in the year A.D. 28 among the Frisians, brought on by the exorbitant demands of their Roman overlords: 'they gave up first their cattle, next their lands, and finally were obliged to see their wives and children carried into slavery by way of commutation'. Tacitus means that the accumulation of these wrongs forced the Frisians to revolt at last. He hardly implies, as Miss Williams appeared to assume, that the Frisians would let any injustice be worked on them, but the moment the family ties were threatened they rose in revolt! Tacitus in the *Germania*, to be sure, enumerates the Frisians among the many Germanic tribes whose collective high regard for marriage has excited his particular admiration, but there is no hint of this or any other one tribe being specially distinguished in the matter.

On this evidence, we are not obliged to consider that the Old English poet in his details of the welcome-home was necessarily describing a specific tribal custom, observed abroad among the Frisians or even in a Frisian settlement in England. His use of a Frisian background is explained sufficiently by the current fame of these people: everyone knew a Frisian sailor was regularly away from his home. The picture of the wife tirelessly eager for her sailor's return may well be a pointed addition of the poet, who, as the succeeding lines of our passage show, was after all a moralist with a point to make and not just a picture to draw. What I think can be proved on other evidence is that the details of this welcome, Frisian or not, are a genuine piece of realistic observation. Sound illustrative parallels are important here. The passage is a famous one, and the claim is frequently made for it of realistic observation, yet until such a claim is substantiated

<sup>1</sup> A. H. Smith, *The Parker Chronicle* (832-900), 'Methuen's Old English Library', London, 1935, pp. 35 ff.

<sup>2</sup> R. W. Chambers, 'Frisia in the Heroic Age', *Beowulf: an Introduction* (2nd ed.), Cambridge, 1932, pp. 288 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Blanche C. Williams, *ed. cit.*, p. 91.

by analogy there will always be the danger of running into unjustified enthusiasms over it. From this aspect, Old English verse is largely homogeneous, a circumscribed body of traditional work; the cottage is so rarely glimpsed behind the cloisters and courtyards, that each sight of it is to be welcomed and cherished indeed, but carefully cleared and considered first.

In support of the claims of realism I bring forward here two modern folk-customs.

(1) The Englishman Arthur Barlow (or Barlowe) wrote a careful account of a 'First Voyage made to the Coasts of America with two Barkes . . . anno 1584'.<sup>1</sup> Barlow was captain of one of these vessels. He tells how after landing and surveying the coast and its inhabitants he and seven companions went exploring up a river which he calls the Occam. They reached the island of Raonoak, on which there stood a fortified village. Here they were received, not indeed by their wives, but by the chief lady there, who acted in so solicitous a manner towards these sea-wearied travellers that we may call it a true 'Frisian' welcome.

When we came towards it, standing near unto the water's side, the wife of Granganimeo, the King's brother, came running out to meet us very cheerfully and friendly, her husband was not then in the village; some of his people she commanded to draw our boat on shore for the beating of the billow: others she appointed to carry us on their backs to the dry ground, and others to bring our oars into the house for fear of stealing. When we were come into the outer room, having five rooms in her house, she caused us to sit down by a great fire, and after took off our clothes and washed them, and dried them again: some of the women plucked off our stockings and washed them, some washed our feet in warm water, and she herself took great pains to see all things ordered in the best manner she could, making great haste to dress some meat for us to eat. . . .

(2) The *hiri* or yearly trading voyage to the west has become an important social event in the lives of the Koita peoples on British New Guinea. Each autumn men of the tribe leave their home bases in the Port Moresby area and sail away with cargoes of sago and other commodities to villages in the river deltas of the Gulf of Papua. A careful observer has seen that this expedition is not merely a trade trip, but is precisely duplicated each successive year with a set of special customs which appear to have been preserved through many generations.<sup>2</sup> Every spring, when the season of the south-east trades begins, certain of the leading men in the tribe secretly and separately decide to organize a boat in that year's expedi-

<sup>1</sup> Richard Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations, Voyages and Discoveries of the English Nation*, ed. of 1900 (London), vol. III.

<sup>2</sup> Captain F. R. Barton (a resident of Port Moresby), 'The Annual Trading Expedition to the Papuan Gulf', in C. G. Seligmann, *The Melanesians of British New Guinea*, Cambridge, 1910, ch. VIII, pp. 96 ff. Quotations below are taken from pp. 108, 110, 111.

tion: each originator (*baditauna*) selects a fellow-helper (*doritauna*) for the task of picking a crew and provisioning and strengthening for the open sea his large sail-canoe. The fleet actually gathers and sets sail in the autumn, when the south-east trades are ending, and only gets back after an interval of about three months, at the time of the north-west monsoons. For some weeks before departure the *baditauna* and *doritauna* and their wives refrain from washing themselves and break off all marital relationships. The restriction on washing is only broken when at length the canoes reach the Gulf inlets: then from each vessel the two organizers 'leap into the water to wash off the accumulated dirt of months'. The strict celibacy is still preserved during the whole voyage and the days of barter with the Papuans. On the return, if the canoes come from villages east of Port Moresby, there are certain places near this main settlement where they always call in and a traditional ritual of restoration is carried through.

Here the *baditauna* and *doritauna* bathe in the sea, and adorn themselves with coconut oil, red pigment and the leaves of a strongly scented shrub called *hebala*, and put on their newest *sihi* [the ceremonial loin-cloth or, more strictly, perineal band of the Koita tribe].

Meantime their wives at home have all the while refrained from washing, have lived a rather restrained and secluded existence, and have been subject to several additional taboos. They eagerly await the return, and news of the first glimpse of the fleet is the signal for elaborate preparations for the set welcome.

They bathe themselves, put on their whole store of ornaments, and go out in canoes to meet the returning vessel, together with the wives and relatives of the members of the crew. . . .

I owe a first reference to this Melanesian folk-custom to the anthropologist Ernest Crawley, who made use of Koita habits in an elaborate and luminous study of the social psychology of dress. On the basis of his large collections of material Crawley was able to enunciate and illustrate some general rules capable of wide application among savage tribes in explanation of their many customs and ceremonies of dress-changing and dress-washing. Thus, 'the garment of a particular state must be discarded when that state is past'. 'Sacred appurtenances may only be used once; when emptied of their force, they must be destroyed.' 'Passage from one state to another is marked frequently by change of apparel.' 'New clothes express a new state or condition.'<sup>1</sup> The last of these is exemplified in the *hiri* of the Koita, which from being a mere trade-voyage has taken on the aspect of

<sup>1</sup> 'The Social Psychology of Dress', in his *Dress, Drinks, and Drums: further Studies of Savages and Sex*, ed. Theodore Besterman, London, 1931, pp. 56 ff. Quotations above are from pp. 69, 70, 73.

a solemn pilgrimage, with regularly recurring special taboos and ceremonies of purification.

Equally well the 'Frisian sailor' passage describes an elaborate welcome which looks like the report, not of one chance occurrence, but of a regularly repeated, traditional proceeding. It is of course on rather higher ground than savage society, and the details in the Old English context of washing the soiled clothes and putting on fresh ones, have a simple and natural motivation, and could not be taken as evidence, say, of any traditional Germanic folk-superstitions concerning the dress of travellers. What is important from both the parallels cited is that the way of welcoming a seafarer in our passage is established as an exact picture of a custom which certainly exists in other parts of the world, and the Old English poet may be set along with moderns who have observed the custom with their own eyes and thought it worth noting down. The moral he draws from it is of course his own affair.

L. WHITBREAD.

#### ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA AND THE BOOK OF REVELATION

Ever since Coleridge praised the 'happy valiancy' of *Antony and Cleopatra*, it has been a commonplace of criticism to admire the play's splendour of style and to attribute it in part to the frequency of 'cosmic imagery', of unusual ideas and astonishing conceptions, expressed with a brilliance unparalleled even in Shakespeare. This effect prevails throughout the play, but rises to the utmost heights in Acts IV and V. It has not perhaps been so often noted that such images and other magnificent utterances are not confined to Antony and to Cleopatra alone, but are also put into the mouths of ordinary folk, in circumstances where they are not dramatically necessary, and are even far more than dramatically adequate. They seem to show a spontaneous overflow of powerful emotion, a superfluity of poetic force in Shakespeare himself.

An example of this is to be found in Act IV, scene xii: the guards enter and find Antony self-wounded, but not yet dead; he begs them to finish his ill-done work and dispatch him:

*Second Guard.* The star is fallen.

*First Guard.* And time is at his period.

*All.* Alas and woe.

*Antony.* Let him that loves me strike me dead.

*Second Guard.* Not I.

The apocalyptic suggestion of the splendid phrases draws one's mind to

the great sentences scattered throughout chapters 8 to 10 of the *Book of Revelation*:<sup>1</sup>

'And there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a torch' (*Rev.*, viii. 10).

'And [he] sware . . . that time should be no more' (*Rev.*, x. 6).

'Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth' (*Rev.*, viii. 13).

'Therefore in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it, and shall desire to die, and death shall fly from them' (*Rev.*, ix. 6).

Here, then, within the compass of thirty-one verses are not only the wording, but something of the idea and the emotion of the five brief, consecutive speeches. If it is legitimate to look upon this as a clue, one may seek further with its aid, to see whether the parallelism here is mere coincidence.

When next the style rises to this dark magnificence, it is some forty lines further on, in Cleopatra's outburst at the sight of Antony dying:

O sun!

Burn the great sphere thou mov'st in; darkling stand  
The varying shore of the world. (IV. xiii. 9-11.)

The mind is taken back to *Revelation* viii; the burning star had fallen when the third angel had sounded. Then

the fourth angel blew, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of stars: so that the third part of them was darkened, and the day was smitten, that the third part of it could not shine, and likewise the night.

It makes little difference whether, with Staunton, the Variorum, and the Oxford editions, we read 'the varying star of the world'.

All this is in Act IV; if such imagery is sought for elsewhere, it will be found with greater intensity in Act V. There Cleopatra tells Dolabella her dream of 'Emperor Antony':

His face was as the heavens, and therein stuck  
A sun and moon, which kept their course, and lighted  
The little O, the earth . . .  
His legs bestrid the ocean; his rear'd arm  
Crested the world; his voice was propertyed  
As all the tuned spheres, and that to friends;  
But when he meant to quail and shake the orb,  
He was as rattling thunder. For his bounty,  
There was no winter in 't, an [autumn] 'twas  
That grew the more by reaping. (V. ii. 79.)

<sup>1</sup> The quotations are taken from the Geneva Bible, with spellings normalized. Mr. Richmond Noble has shown that only one chapter (ch. 19) of *Revelation* was read as a Lesson in church in Shakespeare's time; his acquaintance with the book did not therefore depend on hearing the Bishops' Bible read, but was probably gained through private reading, and for this the Geneva Bible was often used (*Shakespeare's Biblical Knowledge*, 1935). If here he read the Geneva version, 'burning as it were a torch', so we have Antony's phrase, 'the torch is out',—if the Bishops' Bible, 'burning as it were a lamp', we have Cleopatra's 'Our lamp is spent, is out'.



In *Revelation*, x. 1-6, the Apostle describes thus his vision of the angel with the book :

And I saw another mighty Angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud, and the rainbow upon his head : and his face was as the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire . . . and he put his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth. And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth : And when he had cried, seven thunders spake their voices. . . . And the Angel which I saw stand upon the sea, and upon the earth, lift up his hand to heaven, And swear . . . that time should be no more.

The image of the reaping that follows might well be suggested by the later vision in chapter 14, when the angel cries to Him that sat on the white cloud : 'Thrust in thy sickle and reap, for the time is come to reap, for the corn of the earth is ripe' (xiv. 15).

If we may then justifiably feel that the great visions of *Revelation* exalted the conceptions and fired the poetry of the later part of *Antony and Cleopatra*, it is legitimate to seek there also for the source of other striking and unusual phrases and ideas. One such is Cleopatra's desire that hail-stones may destroy her, her children, and her subjects, a curious speech for which no parallel has been suggested, certainly no prototype in Plutarch :

*Ant.* Cold-hearted toward me?

*Cleo.*

Ah, dear, if I be so,

From my cold heart let heaven engender hail,  
And poison it in the source ; and the first stone  
Drop in my neck : as it determines, so  
Dissolve my life. The next Cæsarion smite,  
Till by degrees the memory of my womb,  
Together with my brave Egyptians all,  
By the [discandying] of this pelleted storm,  
Lie graveless, till the flies and gnats of Nile  
Have buried them for prey! (III. xi. 158-167.)

When the seventh angel poured forth his vial, the cities of the nations fell :

Every isle fled away, and the mountains were not found. And there fell a great hail, as it had been talents, out of heaven upon the men, and men blasphemed God, because of the plague of the hail, for the plague thereof was exceeding great. (xvi. 20-21.)

The horror of lying unburied haunts Cleopatra, and she again gives it violent expression, preferring it nevertheless to a Roman triumph :

Shall they hoist me up

And show me to the shouting varletry  
Of censuring Rome? Rather a ditch in Egypt  
Be gentle grave unto me! rather on Nilus' mud  
Lay me stark nak'd, and let the water-flies  
Blow me into abhorring! (v. ii. 55-60.)

The earthly fate of the two Witnesses is thus described by St. John:

And their carcases shall lie in the streets of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt. . . . And they of the people and kindreds, and tongues, and Gentiles shall see their carcases three days and an half, and shall not suffer their carcases to be put in graves. And they that dwell upon the earth, shall rejoice over them and be glad. (xi. 8-10.)

And the humiliation of nakedness is expressed after the plagues of the sixth angel's vial have been described: 'Happy is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and men see his filthiness!' (xvi. 15.)

Earlier in the same scene as Cleopatra's 'hailstones' speech, Antony (after incongruously referring to the Biblical bulls of Bashan) himself gives expression to the image of the falling star:

When my good stars, that were my former guides,  
Have empty left their orbs, and shot their fires  
Into the abysm of hell (III. xi. 145-7).

The falling of stars is a constant event and symbol in the Apocalypse, as again when the fifth angel sounds:

And the fifth Angel blew, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: And to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit, and there arose the smoke of the pit as the smoke of a great furnace. [ix. 1-2. Had someone told Shakespeare that the Greek word translated 'bottomless pit' was *ἄβυσσος*?]

or as at the opening of the sixth seal:

And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her figs (vi. 13).

Just as Antony symbolizes his failure by the falling stars, so Cleopatra's final triumph in death is expressed by Charmian's cry, 'O Eastern star', that 'morning star' promised to him that overcometh (v. ii. 310; II. 28).

The play is full of these undertones and overtones, these subtle correspondences and cross-references both within itself, and also coming in from without. The facts and statements of Plutarch are the ground-bass of the theme; but the undertones of *Revelation*, like sunken bells under the tide, sound through the surge and swell of the poetry. Once at least Shakespeare seems to make a deliberate breakaway, as in the sudden flash of paganism in the brilliantly 'heroic' lines:

Where souls do couch on flowers, we'll hand in hand,  
And with our sprightly port make the ghosts gaze;  
Dido and her Æneas shall want troops,  
And all the haunt be ours (IV. xii. 51-4).

Here the fields of asphodel take the place of the flowerless Heaven of the Apocalypse. It is even possible that Shakespeare was ironically conscious that his heroine, 'Egypt's widow', the 'serpent of old Nile', would by the

moralist be likened rather to the 'great whore that sitteth upon many waters, With whom have committed fornication the kings of the earth' (xvii. 1-2), who, 'glorified herself, and lived wantonly', who 'saith in her heart, I sit being a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no mourning' (xviii. 7). 'The kings of the earth': the phrase comes like a refrain in *Revelation*; on Cæsar's lips (its only use in the play), it sounds an exaggeration even for a Triumvir of the Roman world:

[Antony] hath given his empire  
Up to a whore; who now are levying  
The kings o' the earth for war (III. vi. 66-68).

The superfluous kings of Asia Minor are thus given an unmerited magnificence. This is the only time that Octavius Cæsar, the controlled and rational Roman, is given the 'touch more rare' of the Apocalyptic phrasing; in the next speech he will return to his normal, stoical mode:

But let determined things to destiny  
Hold unbewail'd their way.

Antony's expression of the over-ruling power of destiny will be in a very different tone:

the torch is out,  
... yea, very force entangles  
Itself with strength; seal then, and all is done (IV. xii. 46-9).

It is indeed the sealing of the bond of life; may it not also recall the seven seals of the book, and the sealing of the servants of God in their foreheads?

One may humbly conjecture that, when Shakespeare was fresh from reading Plutarch's story of how Antony and Cleopatra lived and died, he read (or heard in a sermon) the twenty-first chapter of *Revelation*, and the phrases of the first two verses illuminated his working thought. So it would come about that these words of mystery and power, 'a new heaven, and a new earth'—'prepared as a bride trimmed for her husband'<sup>2</sup>—became the secular alpha and omega of his play, from Antony's ecstatic, 'Then must thou needs find out new heaven, new earth', to his resolution,

I will be  
A bridegroom in my death, and run into't  
As to a lover's bed:

then to Cleopatra's, 'I am again for Cydnus, To meet Mark Antony', and finally to 'Husband, I come'.

<sup>1</sup> I am indebted for this suggestion, and for other help which it is a pleasure to acknowledge, to Miss K. M. Lea.

<sup>2</sup> The word 'trimmed' in this verse is found only in the Geneva Bible, the other versions reading 'garnished' or 'adorned'; it might remind Shakespeare of the phrase from North's Plutarch which he keeps almost intact in the scene of Cleopatra's death, Charmian 'trimming the Diadem'.

In many ways *Antony and Cleopatra* is the most strongly human, not to say humanistic, of all Shakespeare's greater plays, the one where human passions and values prevail with least overshadowing of the unearthly, the numinous. The nearest to any deliberate supernatural effect is a direct borrowing from Plutarch, the departure of the god Hercules, with the portent of invisible music. Yet, as if by some compensatory instinct, the visions and phrases of the most mystical of the Scriptures can be discerned, working like a ferment, like leaven, and raising the style of the play, and especially the utterance of the 'pair so famous'. They 'work and wind', as Herbert might say, and move 'the sleeping images of things towards the light', until finally the ideas of tripartite destruction, of falling stars, of visionary figures of colossal magnitude and import, take shape anew, and are projected on the shadowy background, looming behind the lovers. They create the illusion of a vast extension of time and space, already dramatically extended to the full. They even, through poetry alone, devoid of either spiritual or moral significance, enforce the conviction that this most worldly pair, children of luxury and riot, must indeed be viewed *sub specie æternitatis*, as if children of light. The lovers themselves undergo a purification of their passion; and it may well have been brought about by their creator's self-submission to the poetry and the mystery of the *Book of Revelation*.

ETHEL SEATON.

#### THE SUPPOSED CRUX IN *THE TEMPEST*

Professor P. Alexander's recent lecture to the British Academy on 'Shakespeare's Punctuation' suggests that a note on Ferdinand's opening speech in the third act of *The Tempest* may be opportune. The last line of the speech has been more criticized and more persistently emended than any other line in Shakespeare. Furness in the Variorum edition devotes nearly twelve pages to it. I am not the first to hold that the Folio text is sound, and I take points in favour of it from Furness.

Ferdinand has been carrying logs and is temporarily resting: he moralizes.

I must remoue  
Some thousands of these Logs, and pile them vp,  
Vpon a sore iniunction; my sweet Mistris  
Weepes when she sees me worke, & saies, such basenes,  
Had neuer like Executor: I forget:  
But these sweet thoughts, do euen refresh my labours,  
Most busie lest, when I do it.

'Lest' is a spelling of 'least' from the thirteenth to the seventeenth century, and Benjamin Heath in *A Revisal of Shakespeare's Text*, 1765, read 'Most

busy, least when I do it'; his reading was accepted by Watkiss Lloyd, J. P. Collier, Dyce in his first edition, Cowden Clarke, John Hunter, Furnivall, and Rolfe. Professor Dover Wilson in the new *Cambridge Shakespeare* raises two objections: 'it is generally felt to be awkward, and it involves the alteration of the comma, a serious point in this carefully punctuated text'. Is the 'awkwardness' of the inversion 'generally felt'? J. M. D. Meiklejohn in 1889 explained that 'the order of the words is changed to emphasize the opposition of "most" and "least"'. Not only so, but Professor Wilson's second point can be met. The comma after 'lest' is what I have called in my *Shakesperian Punctuation* (section 7) an emphasizing comma. The exact reproduction in modern printing would be 'Most busy, *least* when I do it'. For the use of the comma to mark emphasis and inversion compare *King Lear*, IV. i. 15-7:

good Friend be gone,  
Thy comforts can do me no good at all,  
Thee, they may hurt.

And *Macbeth*, III. ii. 38:

*Lady*. But in them, Natures Coppie's not eterne.

Dr. Johnson's shrewd saying, 'I have always suspected that the reading is right, which requires many words to prove it wrong', is the best commentary on this much-disputed passage.

PERCY SIMPSON.

#### NOTE ON MILTON'S USE OF THE WORD 'DANGER'

Now lately Heaven and Earth, another World  
Hung ore my Realm, link'd in a golden Chain  
To that side Heav'n from whence your Legions fell:  
If that way be your walk, you have not farr;  
So much the neerer danger; go and speed;  
Havoc and spoil and ruin are my gain.

(*Paradise Lost*, II, 1004-9.)

Chaos is answering Satan's request to direct him to the newly created world. The commentators do not gloss 'danger', and so presumably read it in its ordinary modern sense: but what then is the point of this particular remark of Chaos? It is out of character and out of the tenour of his speech that Chaos should be concerned with the peril of Satan's quest; he is thinking only of Satan's declared purpose to wreck this new creation and reduce it again 'to her original darkness and your sway'. 'Danger' is clearly used here in the obsolete sense of 'power to hurt or harm'; or else in the simple sense of 'mischief, harm, damage', of which the last examples



quoted by *O.E.D.* are from Shakespeare. It is similarly used at *Comus*, 401:

as bid me hope  
 Danger will wink on Opportunity,  
 And let a single helpless maiden pass  
 Uninjur'd in this wilde surrounding wast.

B. A. WRIGHT.

### FALSTAFF AND SMOLLETT'S MICKLEWHIMMEN

In view of Smollett's constant reference to and quotation of Shakespeare in his novels<sup>1</sup> and of his 'close reading of the Falstaff comedies',<sup>2</sup> there is good reason to conclude that his treatment of Micklewhimmen in *Humphry Clinker* borrows heavily from the treatment of Falstaff in *Henry IV*, II. iv. The main acts of cowardice differ, of course. When the inn at Harrogate catches fire, Micklewhimmen, an old Scotch lawyer who has gained much sympathy as a paralytic and victim of other ailments, comes charging down the passageway with a portmanteau on his shoulders and fights his way to the bottom of the crowded stairs, trampling over guests of both sexes.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, Falstaff and his robber-companions in II, ii, flee when they are assailed by Prince Hal and Poins. But there is strong evidence of borrowing in the supporting details—and especially in the theory by which Micklewhimmen justifies himself.

When Hal tells Falstaff about the trick played on him, Falstaff thus endeavours to account for his flight:

. . . but beware instinct; the lion will not touch the true prince. Instinct is a grave matter; I was now a coward on instinct.<sup>4</sup>

When Micklewhimmen is reproached for his violently inconsiderate escape, he explains:

. . . I cannot claim any merit from the mode of my retreat. . . . there are two independent principles that actuate our nature. One is instinct, which we have in common with the brute creation, and the other reason. Noo, in certain great emergencies, when the faculty of reason is suspended, instinct takes the lead, . . . therefore, . . . I'm not accountable in *foro conscientiae* for what I did, while under the influence of this irresistible pooer.

<sup>1</sup> George Morrow Kahrl, 'The Influence of Shakespeare on Smollett', *The Parrott Presentation Volume*, ed. Hardin Craig (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1935), pp. 399-420. There are two references to Shakespeare in *Roderick Random*, thirteen in *Peregrine Pickle*, eleven in *Ferdinand Count Fathom*, six in *Sir Launcelot Greaves*, twelve in *Humphry Clinker*, and six in *Adventures of an Atom* (pp. 399-400 and *nn.*).

<sup>2</sup> L. M. Ellison, 'Elizabethan Drama and the Works of Smollett', *P.M.L.A.*, vol. xlv (1929), p. 846.

<sup>3</sup> These events are described in J. Melford's letter dated 'Scarborough, July 1.' Unless otherwise noted, subsequent references to *Humphry Clinker* are to the contents of this letter.

<sup>4</sup> *Henry IV*, II, iv, 269-72. Line numbers are those of the 4th. Arden edition (London, 1930).

Both men, besides using *instinct* identically, admit the discreditable conduct, compare men and beasts, and treat themselves as objects of a transcendent, morally neutral power.

Smollett continues to follow Shakespeare closely: like Falstaff, Micklewhimmen is twitted about his theory. Five times Hal playfully speaks about *instinct*, either referring directly to Falstaff's excuse or applying it to other matters;<sup>1</sup> three times Micklewhimmen's associates make ironic application of his psychology, and Smollett himself adds a fourth comment. Very strikingly, Smollett even uses Shakespeare's method of making the coward become, in part, master of the situation—by sheer brazenness and hard-boiled casuistry, however, rather than by Falstaffian gaiety, resilience, and light-hearted carelessness of consequences.

That Smollett had Shakespeare's scene in mind is indicated also by more general similarities: like Falstaff, Micklewhimmen is a great eater and drinker; like Falstaff, he has a trick played upon him—Melford's public demonstration that his 'stomachic tincture' is claret; as Falstaff pretends to bravery, Micklewhimmen pretends to ill health. The novel is most emphatically reminiscent of the play in that each character is exposed in a special pretence of the moment: whereas Falstaff has hacked his sword and by making his nose bleed has made himself look like a bloody veteran of combat, Micklewhimmen groans, needs assistance, and wears a 'bloody napkin round his head'. In the one aspect in which the episode is Shakespearian in tone as well as in framework, Micklewhimmen grinningly accepts a challenge, lightly dances a Scotch measure, and thus tacitly admits the unreality of his injuries. Finally, the hold-up itself is apparently remembered and used by Smollett, who has *two* hold-ups just before his fire-scene;<sup>2</sup> in the first of these the role of Martin, who drives off other hold-up men, is not unlike that of Hal in *1 Henry IV*, II. ii.

It is even possible that Micklewhimmen's dichotomy of reason and instinct may reflect part of the play. Before the exposé, Falstaff, while boasting of his exploit, is caught in a contradiction. '... tell us your reason', Hal demands of him, and Poins adds, '... your reason, ... your reason'; in answering, Falstaff himself uses the word three times.<sup>3</sup> Since Smollett knew Shakespeare chiefly by the acted plays,<sup>4</sup> it is quite possible that the word *reason*, six times repeated, was echoed indistinctly in his memory as a part of the configuration of Falstaff images and hence, although in a changed form, came to the surface with the others.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *1 Henry IV*, II. iv. ll. 298-300, 317, 355-6, 371, 493.

<sup>2</sup> They are described in the two letters immediately preceding the one containing Melford's account of Micklewhimmen. The first is Melford's letter dated 'Harrogate, June 23', and the second Bramble's dated 'Harrogate, June 26'.

<sup>3</sup> *Ed. cit.*, II, iv, 232-40.

<sup>4</sup> Kahrl, *loc. cit.*, pp. 408-9.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Kahrl, *loc. cit.*, p. 408: 'Even more frequently Smollett slightly alters the context—not mechanically but as one who has the original ringing in his ears.'

The external facts which add weight to the supposition that Smollett was borrowing are Smollett's regular use of Shakespeare, the twelve Shakespeare references in *Humphry Clinker*, the consistent references to the Falstaff plays in other Smollett novels, and the fact that the Falstaff of the actor James Quin was Smollett's favourite Shakespearian character.<sup>1</sup> Now Quin is lengthily described in *Humphry Clinker*. Of this well-known description, several details are worth noting here. Quin is a great eater and drinker,<sup>2</sup> like Falstaff and Micklewhimmen; Jerry says to Quin, 'I would give a hundred guineas to see Mr. Quin act the part of Falstaff', and Quin says life 'would stink in his nostrils, if he did not steep it in claret'<sup>3</sup>—the wine which is Micklewhimmen's hourly consolation for disability.

Smollett, however, did *not* borrow the Shakespearian spirit; in the main, Micklewhimmen is satirized, as Falstaff is not. A comparison with Smollett's sharp portrayal of the calculating lawyer sheds light on the innocuous humour and the essential childlikeness and irresponsibility of Falstaff.<sup>4</sup>

ROBERT B. HEILMAN.

<sup>1</sup> Kahrl, *loc. cit.*, pp. 399-400 and *nn.*, 408-9, 411-12.

<sup>2</sup> Melford's letter dated 'Bath, May 6'.

<sup>3</sup> Melford's letter dated 'Bath, April 30'.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Ellison's observations, *loc. cit.*, pp. 844 ff. The present contrast of Falstaff and Micklewhimmen is paralleled in detail by Ellison's contrast of Falstaff and Mr. Ferret (in *Sir Launcelot Greaves*) in their respective dealings with Justice Shallow and Justice Gobble—identical logic, but sharp dissimilarity in tone.

## CORRESPONDENCE

### THE STAGING OF *KING LEAR*

THE EDITOR, *Review of English Studies*.

DEAR SIR,

A recent exchange of views with Mr. John Berryman, of Princeton, N.J., who is at work on a critical edition of *King Lear*, has convinced me that some at least of the ideas on the staging of the play that I put forward in *R.E.S.* in July, 1940 (xvi. 300-3) need modifying. Exactly how much of my theory must be scrapped I am not yet certain; but it seems clear that my contention that the act and scene division in the Folio is original cannot stand. The Folio arrangement could only be original if the manuscript used in preparing that text were Shakespeare's original draft. But in *The Editorial Problem in Shakespeare* (p. 100, note) I argued, on the contrary, that it was the prompt-book, and from this conclusion it is difficult to escape. Both the alternative cutting and the reduction of minor characters (especially the fusion of Doctor and Gentleman in iv. vii) point strongly in that direction. And it would be unreasonable to suppose that, in the course of fifteen years' use at the Globe, the book, whatever peculiarities of staging it may once have displayed, had not been brought into conformity with the usual practice of the house. It is therefore possible that the Folio division was introduced by the editor, working on the undivided Quarto and an undivided manuscript, and that he merely overlooked the necessity of making Edgar's soliloquy in Act II a separate scene. (That a prompt-book should be undivided need not surprise us: the Folio *Hamlet* is believed to have been printed from the prompt-book, or from a transcript of it, but only the first two acts are divided, and that imperfectly.) Alternatively, the manuscript used for the Folio *Lear* may have been altered to fit it for a late provincial performance. This, I understand, is the view to which Mr. Berryman inclines, and it may prove the more fruitful hypothesis.

Yours faithfully,

W. W. GREG.

## REVIEWS

**Verbal Repetition in the 'Ancræn Riwe'.** By SISTER AGNES MARGARET HUMBERT. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1944. Pp. xxii+137. [No price given.]

It is, perhaps, not without some significance that the most recent of learned works on the *Ancræn Riwe* should be the product of a Catholic University and from the other side of the Atlantic.

Of set purpose modestly limited in scope, Sister Agnes Margaret Humbert's able study is an important contribution to *Riwe* literature. Rhetorical analysis of the sort presented here meets a manifest need, for such dicta as have been made on the rhetoric of the *Riwe* have been based on general observation rather than on closely reasoned analysis and are therefore inconclusive and unreliable. This book is concerned only with repetitive figures of speech, 'and is further limited to instances of verbal repetition', for the author believes that a detailed examination of 'one aspect of rhetoric in the *Riwe*' should 'yield more satisfactory results than a broader, more general and hence more superficial survey'.

It is her object 'to determine the extent to which repetitive figures recur in the text, together with their function and their effect upon the style as a whole'. A penetrating investigation reveals approximately 636 verbally repetitive schemes which, she concludes, are usually 'organically functional' and give an effect 'in many cases obviously deliberate'. It is in establishing the degree of deliberation, the conscious artifice of technique, that her critical powers are most apparent.

The detailed method of analysis adopted, covering every aspect of the verbal repetition used—anaphora, antistrophe, epanalepsis, symploce, and the rest—is admirably clear, direct, and exhaustive. The ample quotations from Morton's text are chosen with discrimination, and the analysis of the passages presented is at once sensitive and acute. The value of a study conducted along such lines is evident. Tantalizingly vague generalizations concerning 'style' are avoided if each stylistic quality is subjected to a process of careful and exact analysis.

What emerges abundantly from this sensitive and impressive piece of research is that the *Ancræn Riwe* derives from a tradition of rhetorical skill—'an unpretentious treatise written by one who is by training a conscious stylist'—in the true homiletic vein of Wulfstan and Aelfric.

Miss Humbert's book is an outstanding testimony to the fine and accurate quality of American scholarship. It is to be hoped that she will continue her work with similar analyses. As it is, we are vastly indebted to her for so lucid, well-balanced, and competent a study of one aspect of rhetoric, verbal repetition, in the *Riwe*.

BEATRICE WHITE.

**The True Text of 'King Lear'.** By LEO KIRSCHBAUM. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press; London: Oxford University Press, 1945. Pp. x+81. \$1.75; 11s. 6d. net.

What I may perhaps be allowed to call the current theory of the relation between the quarto and folio texts of *King Lear* is briefly this. Q is a reported text, which



has passed through the memories of the actors or of a reporter or both: F was printed from Q after this had been carefully corrected and supplemented by collation with the prompt-book. To this view Dr. Kirschbaum and I both subscribe. The only, or at least the main, point on which we differ is exactly how the quarto text was obtained. To account for its general excellence and for certain peculiarities I have suggested that it was taken down by shorthand during a performance. Dr. Kirschbaum sets out to show that it is the memorial reconstruction of a reporter. Admittedly it is much more accurate than most of the texts that criticism now recognizes as reports from memory. But I have myself pointed out how surprisingly exact are some passages in the 1597 *Romeo and Juliet*, and if the reporter had been able to maintain his highest standard throughout, he would have produced an even better text than the quarto *Lear*. Is there any reason to suppose such a feat possible? Dr. Kirschbaum instances the quarto *Richard III*, which I agree is better on the whole than *Lear*. But that I am inclined to regard as a communal reconstruction by the company. The same origin might be suggested for *Lear*—only one would like to be able to guess something of the circumstances that led to such a reconstruction, and to explain some points in which *Lear* differs from *Richard III*. I am not at all in love with the shorthand hypothesis, and if it can be shown that memorial reporting will adequately account for the state of the quarto text of *Lear*, I shall be delighted to accept that explanation. The question therefore is whether, as I have hitherto assumed, there are peculiar features in *Lear* that make shorthand the least improbable agency; or whether all the features of the text can be satisfactorily explained on the supposition of memorial reconstruction. This is what Dr. Kirschbaum attempts in his analysis of seventy passages from the play. In each instance he first prints the texts, then discusses the variants, and at the end records what editors have done about it. The last is a depressing story. It is in his discussion of variants that the importance of Dr. Kirschbaum's study lies.

Dr. Kirschbaum recognizes that nothing short of a fully annotated edition of the whole play could adequately set forth the evidence, but he has done well with his selected passages. His argument is always reasonable and often acute. That he succeeds in demonstrating that F is by far the more original text, and that editors have neglected it at their peril and generally with unfortunate results, goes almost without saying. At the same time I cannot but feel that he carries his loyalty just a little too far. I am as convinced that 'Sure I shall never marry like my sisters To love my father all' (i. i. 105-6) is Shakespeare's, as Dr. Kirschbaum is that it is the reporter's. Elsewhere (iv. vi. 168-9) I believe the true text to be: 'Through tattered clothes small vices do appear; Robes and furred gowns hide all'—F's 'great vices do appear' cannot mean 'all vices appear great'. In a less important case (iv. vi. 71) I believe that 'Horns welked and waved like the enridged sea' is what Shakespeare intended: 'enridged' (Q) is far too good to be a chance mishearing by the reporter, whereas 'enraged' (F) would be an easy substitution for the compositor to make, and may be a mere memory-mishearing<sup>1</sup>—in a simile for the curving or ribbing of horns 'enraged' is altogether extravagant. Nor can I for a moment believe that in F (iv, iv, 28) 'our ag'd Fathers Rite' is anything but a misprint, the spelling being attracted to that of the rime-word 'incite'. At v. iii. 114, Dr. Kirschbaum is no doubt free to suggest

<sup>1</sup> Or it might be a substitution by an editor who did not understand the text. Dr. Kirschbaum does not discuss the variants Q *rash*: F *stick* and Q *dearne*: F *sterne* at iii, vii, 58 and 63, which are almost certainly substitutions of this sort.

that 'trumper' is not a misprint for 'trumpet' but a form of 'trumpeter'; but he should have mentioned that this form is not recorded (at any rate in *O.E.D.*) after the fifteenth century.<sup>1</sup>

But the question at issue is how to account for the corruption of Q. Admittedly we cannot put all the blame on the actors: Q cannot always accurately represent the play as performed, for there are tangles in the text that are unlikely to have been tolerated on the stage. A reporter might produce them if his memory failed him: but equally a stenographer's script would doubtless be imperfect at times, and in transcribing it he would have to patch as best he could. A more cogent argument for memorial reconstruction is that some passages (e.g. i. iv. 336 ff.) that at first sight look as though they had been merely cut, are seen on closer examination to be cases of telescoping. It was perhaps a mistake to record every reading in which Q differs from F, for many of the minor variants are without significance, being assignable to almost any agency. It also seems to me a little unfortunate that Dr. Kirschbaum should so often write, 'the reporter substitutes', and so forth, since it has at least the appearance of prejudicing the issue. It is up to him to show that this is more likely than other possible explanations.

Dr. Kirschbaum appears to think that there are two passages particularly hard to explain as reports of an actual performance, and I am therefore tempted to say something about each. The first is ii. iv. 191-2, Lear's speech beginning 'Who stocked my servant?' Q always misunderstands the word 'stocked'; and 'struck' seems the obvious substitute, even apart from actual occurrences of the word elsewhere. But if we read 'struck', the lines can only belong to Goneril, and the fact that she enters at this point makes their assignment to her all the easier. I do not imagine that the error occurred in production, but nothing is more likely than that a stenographer should get into trouble over the speakers. Dr. Kirschbaum is right in saying that whoever was responsible 'did not remember the true action and true speaker of the present passage'. But it seems to me improbable that anyone as familiar with the play as Dr. Kirschbaum's reporter must have been should have fallen into such an error. Why should the word 'stocked' have puzzled him? The whole is surely the error, not of one whose verbal memory failed him, but of one with some guide to the form of the words, yet lacking any real knowledge of the play.

The other passage is v. iii. 305-13, Lear's death. Again I do not pretend that Q represents exactly what was spoken on the stage, but I find no difficulty in explaining it as a report of a stage performance. The accident of writing 'of' for 'have' might happen to any one (I have known a highly educated person make the slip in a hasty note), the expansion of 'Thou'lt' to 'thou wilt' is equally irrelevant to the issue. The lines 'Do you see this? Look on her! look, her lips—

<sup>1</sup> There is one consideration that restricts to an appreciable but uncertain extent the authority of F. Being actually printed from a corrected copy of Q it must inevitably reproduce from it any errors that were overlooked in collation. Some such errors can be proved: e.g. at iv. ii. 79, F retains 'Justices' from the original state of the sheet in Q, although the press reader had already corrected it to 'Justicers'; again at ii. iv. 37, '*Historica passio*' is an obvious common error. We may be sure there are others less clearly demonstrable. For instance, I believe that in the opening conversation the text should run (i. i. 10-13):

*Glou.* . . . I have so often blushed to acknowledge him, that now I am brazed to 't.

*Kent.* I cannot conceive—

*Glou.* Sir, this young fellow's mother could . . .

Q, concentrating on the immediate context, printed, 'I cannot conceive you'. This, of course, is the usual phrase for 'I don't understand', but it makes nonsense of Gloucester's answer. Nevertheless F agrees with Q.

Look there, look there!' are omitted in Q, not 'because of the four occurrences of the same word, *look*'—which seems to me no reason at all—but because their import was not understood. They may even have been cut on the stage, for the suggestion that Lear dies of joy in the belief that Cordelia lives, may have proved too subtle to put across. The 'four melodramatic groans', 'O, o, o, o', are less suggestive of a reporter trying to recollect the words of a play, than of one attempting to reproduce what he hears—the shuddering groan or sigh with which Lear sinks into oblivion. And why, after that, should memory suggest that 'Break heart, I prithee break!' was spoken by Lear instead of Kent? Even if Edgar thought that Lear had only fainted, no one who knew the play could have been misled. But a stenographer might easily confuse or mistake the symbols, whatever they were, that he used to mark the speakers.

There are other points at which Dr. Kirschbaum's explanations seem to me less likely than some that can be suggested. In the challenge scene (v. iii. 102–17) Q makes Edmund push himself to the front, echoing Albany with 'A Herald ho! a herald!' and taking upon himself the calls for the trumpet at the end. Why should a reporter make Edmund 'much more aggressive . . . than F portrays him'? It seems much more likely that the actor of Edmund was of the robustious sort, who breaks in where he is not wanted and steals the speeches of others. Such an actor would fit the part. And the Captain's order 'Sound trumpet!' before the Herald's proclamation would be a very likely stage addition. An interesting case is i. iv. 280, 'Is it your will? speak sir.—Prepare my horses!' which in Q appears as 'O sir, are you come? is it your will that we prepare any horses?' I cannot possibly believe that 'O sir, are you come?' is a recollection of 'Oh you sir! come you hither, sir! who am I, sir?' a couple of hundred lines before; and why, because he omitted 'speak sir', should the reporter give us 'the bewildering restatement' that follows? On the other hand, 'O sir, are you come?' would be a very natural 'connective' insertion by an actor on Albany's entrance, and would easily displace the later 'speak sir'; the rest appears to be a compositor's desperate attempt to make sense of the stenographer's unpunctuated script, 'is it your will prepare my horses'—in which he was misled at the start by misreading 'my' as 'any'. Similarly at i. iv. 332, Q's 'thou shalt I warrant thee' seems to me a typical actor's insertion, catching up and emphasizing 'Thou shalt find . . .'. To say that 'thou shalt' 'indicates memorial contamination' (and is therefore due to a reporter?) is at least an abuse of language: contamination can only affect an existing phrase, it cannot create one. Throughout, it seems to me, Dr. Kirschbaum is too mechanical in his reliance on what may be called associative contamination—the corruption, that is, of one passage by the wording of another that is associated with it in memory. It is, of course, a perfectly real and even frequent cause of corruption; but there must be both a real resemblance and a plausible association between the passages before we can assume it. Once again: the final speech, v. iii. 323–6, belongs by right to Edgar; Q gives it to Albany because, as Kitteredge remarked, such an 'epilogue' is normally spoken by 'the person of highest rank who survives'. But was it, as Dr. Kirschbaum assumes, the reporter who misassigned it? I think the actors are much more likely to have insisted on the normal theatrical ritual being observed. Two minor points. i. iv. 314–5, 'But let his disposition have that scope As dotage gives it': Q reads 'that' for 'As'. To say that this is 'probably because of "that" immediately preceding' strikes me as perverse. If F is indeed correct, as it may be, any actor, reporter, or transcriber would be apt to substitute the normally grammatical word. Lastly

in v. iii. 147, 'hell hatedly' is surely not a 'mishearing' of 'hell-hated lie', but a mere misprint for 'hell hated ly'.

For my own part I am convinced that a great deal of the corruption of Q, though by no means all, is due to the actors. The text has undergone a process of attrition, in which the difficulties and roughnesses of the original have been removed or worn smooth in use. That is why it has so often commended itself to editors. Dr. Kirschbaum appears to deny this agency altogether; but it is by no means incompatible with the essence of his theory. If the reporter had gained his familiarity with the text in the course of representation, it would naturally be the text as spoken on the stage that he would reproduce. The real question is: Was the spoken text reported by shorthand or by memory? As a feat of memory it would be a truly remarkable performance, though it would be rash to say that it was impossible. But the reporter must have known the play remarkably well. Why should he have written down the text without line-division and without punctuation, as he appears to have done? For in Q such metrical arrangement and punctuation as there is looks like the work of composers of different degrees of competence. On the other hand, such is just the text that would result from stenography. As I have said, I should like to get rid of the hypothesis of shorthand altogether, but I feel unable to discard it till I am offered a more convincing substitute than any at present in view.

While it is right and proper that Alexander Schmidt should be given credit for first discerning the true character of the quarto texts of *King Lear* and *Richard III*, it must be remembered that he seems to have intended his theory to cover the quartos generally.

W. W. GREG.

**The Humors and Shakespeare's Characters.** By JOHN W. DRAPER. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press. 1945. Pp. viii + 126. \$2.00.

The author of this book sets out to apply to the 'all-important matter of interpretation' of character, 'the precise historical method given to text and sources'. He therefore examines Shakespeare's characters—from the major lines of portrayal and grouping to the details of individual reaction and passing reference—in the light of Elizabethan psycho-medical theory. The psychological aspect of the humour theory, or humoral interpretation of temperament, has long been familiar to students of medieval literature, but more recent research has established more clearly the specific Elizabethan views. It is this that the author has taken into account in a series of papers on Shakespeare's characters, and it is upon this preliminary study that the present survey, of the whole field of Shakespearean characterization, is based; Draper considers that interpretation hitherto has too often erred in the direction of neglecting psychology or in an ill-advised application of 'Victorian or recent theories.'

Whether or not one goes all the way with certain modern schools in believing that 'the precise historical method' so obviously called for in the treatment of text is necessarily as fruitful in revealing the underlying wisdom and the enduring values of poetry, it is clear that an investigation of this kind, backed by much specialized learning in the field of Elizabethan psychology, will be of great service to students of the period. Whether, again, the average member of the Elizabethan audience (or, indeed, Shakespeare himself) was as fully conscious of the details of the system as appears to be implied, may perhaps be respectfully questioned,



especially when we remember how few contemporary audiences and playwrights (with the exception of one French school) have clear and conscious knowledge of the details of the system accepted by psychologists at the present day. The cases are not strictly parallel, however, and it is one function of a book such as this now before us to bring together a body of reference and implications from the whole range of Shakespeare's plays, sufficient to convince us of a habitual and traditional knowledge such as would be less probable in ages of greater specialization.

The book is arranged in a manner at once systematic and straightforward. An introductory chapter surveys the progress of character interpretation in Shakespearian criticism and states the grounds for the present re-interpretation of the characters as Shakespeare's contemporaries would have seen them. Each of the four humours is then treated in its turn in a chapter which summarizes the contemporary theory and illustrates Shakespeare's presentation in a number of characters, some of which are examined at length. Three further chapters analyse the more complicated cases of 'The Balanced and Mercurial Types', 'Counterfeit Humors', and 'Changing Humors,' thus indicating the subtlety of Shakespeare's reading of the system as distinguished from that of Ben Jonson, its doctrinaire and scientific exponent.

There is a select list of some forty relevant Elizabethan handbooks and an index.

UNA ELLIS-FERMOR.

**The Tragic Muse of John Ford.** By G. F. SENSABAUGH. California: Stanford University Press; London: Oxford University Press, 1944. Pp. x+196. \$2.00; 12s. net.

For the last seventy years it has been fashionable to describe Ford as modern: Swinburne, Havelock Ellis and the Ibsenites were equally convinced upon this matter, but Dr. Sensabaugh elevates him to the position of 'prophet of the modern world'. The revelation of which Ford was given inspired foreknowledge was scientific determinism (mediated through the physiology of *The Anatomy of Melancholy*), and 'unbridled individualism', as proclaimed by the devotees of platonic love at the court of Henrietta Maria, 'a philosophy of life which the "emancipated" mind of the present would be quick to endorse' (p. 106).

Of the Queen herself Dr. Sensabaugh remarks: 'She no doubt fell under the influence of the Hôtel de Rambouillet, a sort of soirée group established by Catherine de Vivonne' (*loc. cit.*), who may therefore be looked upon in some sense as the grandmother of modernism. Perhaps even this would be less odious to the Marquise than to be the inspiration once removed of *Love's Sacrifice*.

The connexion between scientific speculation and courtly Platonism might have been traced from the writings of Giordano Bruno and the Sidney circle to those of Robert Boyle. Dr. Sensabaugh has indeed made some attempt to investigate the writings of the court, such as the plays of Davenant and Suckling, and the controversies arising from the cult of the Virgin; this part of the book is one which may be read with advantage. For the rest it must be confessed that whilst he has certainly emphasized, and rightly, the peculiar fatalism of Ford's plays, and the significance of Burton's physiology as the vehicle of this fatalism, the attempt to relate it to the wider issues of contemporary thought is so very far from complete that those acquainted with the period will gain but little from their reading. Others who may imagine that the title indicates a critical literary



estimate of Ford as a poetic dramatist will be wholly unrewarded. As for the claim that Ford is a prophet of the modern world, it is, alas! with some nostalgic pangs that the present generation reverts to 'Bertrand Russell, Thomas Hardy and Eugene O'Neill' (p. 93), who, even if they were at one with Ford in seeing life 'not as a pilgrimage governed by moral decisions which spring from a free and responsible will, but as a journey ruled by amoral scientific statutes which inexorably sweep man to his doom', were not required to take into account those factors which incline the modern mind in 1946 to find its appropriate prophetic reading in the second half of the Book of Jonah.

M. C. BRADBROOK.

**Thomas Traherne.** By GLADYS I. WADE. Princeton: Princeton University Press; London: Oxford University Press. 1944. Pp. x+269. 20s. net.

This book, although it contains a very full and useful account of all Traherne's known writings, is considerably more important as a biographical than as a critical study, for, as the result of long and careful researches, the author is able to tell us far more about Traherne's life and environment than we knew before.

Even the hitherto unknown date of his birth is now confined within the limits of 1 March 1637 and 26 February 1639. From the internal evidence of the poems and the *Centuries* the author very acutely and plausibly suggests that their mother died early, and that Thomas Traherne and his brother Philip were brought up by their relative Philip Traherne, innkeeper and twice Mayor of Hereford. Moreover, since there is no record that either of the brothers attended the Hereford Grammar School, since Thomas entered Brasenose as a commoner, and must, accordingly, have been 'subsisted' by someone, since a passage in the *Centuries* (III, 25) seems to imply a somewhat unconventional education, and since Philip, who was never at a university, became a considerable Greek scholar and orientalist, she plausibly suggests that their uncle may have employed a private tutor and in other ways have contributed generously towards their education. Her attempt to use the internal evidence of the *Centuries* in order to trace Traherne's development during his adolescence and early youth is not always equally satisfactory. The description of 'a curious and fair woman' and other things in the *Second Century* (66-68) can hardly be regarded as evidence that Traherne, before going up to Oxford at the age of fifteen, had led a 'wanton' life; and on pp. 43-5 her chronology seems to be at fault, for what she calls his 'first spiritual crisis' almost certainly occurred, not during his adolescence, but during his childhood. Again, although she rightly supposes that No. 46 of the *Third Century* implies that he spent the time between his proceeding B.A. in October 1656 and his presentation to the living of Credenhill in December 1657 quietly at Hereford, she is surely mistaken in finding there evidence of a 'second spiritual crisis' and in inferring from the following passage that Traherne was offered 'an opportunity . . . of entering on a career that would entail great "care and labour", but which promised considerable financial rewards—"many thousands per annum" in his own words' (p. 59):

When I came into the country, and being seated among silent trees, and meads and hills, had all my time in mine own hands, I resolved to spend it all, whatever it cost me, in search of happiness, and to satiate that burning thirst which Nature had enkindled in me from my youth. In which I was so resolute,

that I chose rather to live upon ten pounds a year, and to go in leather clothes, and feed upon bread and water, so that I might have all my time clearly to myself, than to keep many thousands per annum in an estate of life where my time would be devoured in care and labour.

Surely, when a writer tells us that he chose rather to live happily on £10 a year than unhappily on £10,000, we can no more regard his statement as evidence that he had actually been offered £10,000 a year than we could regard Shakespeare's declaration that he scorned to change his state with kings as evidence that he had actually been offered a throne. In searching for 'internal evidence' one must carefully distinguish between possible or probable statements of fact and mere metaphors and manners of speaking.

One of the most valuable things in the book is its account of that remarkable woman Mrs. Susanna Hopton, Traherne's friend and patroness, who, after having been a militant episcopalian and Royalist under Charles I, showed her contempt for the Puritans and the Commonwealth by joining the Church of Rome, in her re-conversion from which Traherne probably played some part, and whose house became the centre of a religious community, similar to the more famous one established by Nicholas Ferrar at Little Gidding. It was almost certainly to her that Traherne addressed the *Centuries of Meditations*, and when in 1667 he went to London as chaplain to Sir Orlando Bridgeman (a position which he may well have obtained through Mrs. Hopton, one of whose relatives was married to Sir Orlando's friend Sir Heneage Finch), he seems to have left with her the MSS. of several devotional works. One of these, *A Serious and Pathetical Contemplation of the Mercies of God*, was published in 1699 (not, as the misprint on p. 85 has it, in 1669) by Mrs. Hopton's friend Dr. Hickes, anonymously, but with a brief account of the author, probably by Mrs. Hopton herself, and with a preface by Hickes alluding to Mrs. Hopton as the one who had recommended its publication. After Mrs. Hopton's death in 1709 more of her Traherne MSS. passed to Hickes, who believed that they were of her own composition, and, after his own death, his intention to publish them was carried out by his and Mrs. Hopton's friend Nathaniel Spinckes. The author's description of these works, as well as of *Christian Ethicks* and *Roman Forgeries*, the only two published with Traherne's name on the title-page, is clear and sensible, and gives the reader a very fair idea of what he may expect to find. She is almost certainly right in regarding *Roman Forgeries* as 'an act of championship for a man as well as a cause', for it was published in 1673, a year after Traherne's patron Sir Orlando Bridgeman, because of his opposition to what he regarded as the Popish policy of Charles II, had been dismissed from his office of Lord Keeper and succeeded by Shaftesbury.

Of the two works on which Traherne's reputation really rests, the poems and the *Centuries of Meditations*, her general remarks on the style are acute and convincing, but she has nothing very new or illuminating to say about the content. Her interpretation of the verses inscribed on the first leaf of the MS. of the *Centuries*,

This book unto the friend of my best friend  
As of the wisest Love a mark I send,  
That she may write my Maker's praise therin  
And make her self thereby a Cherubin,

namely, that Traherne is addressing his own spirit (pp. 181-2), seems to the reviewer fantastic and unnecessary. They will not, perhaps, bear the scrutiny

of strict logic, but their natural meaning seems to be that Mrs. Hopton is the friend of Traherne's best friend, i.e., of Christ, and that Traherne hopes she may be encouraged by the perusal of his book to write (and add) meditations of her own and thus become, as it were, like the cherubim and seraphim, singing continually before the throne of God.

Nevertheless, although the reviewer cannot regard all parts of this book as equally valuable, he, like others, will always remain deeply grateful and indebted to the author for her patient biographical and bibliographical researches, with the results of which he would recommend all lovers of Traherne to make themselves familiar.

J. B. LEISHMAN.

**Essays on the Eighteenth Century.** Presented to David Nichol Smith in honour of his seventieth birthday. Oxford: at the Clarendon Press, 1945. Pp. vi + 288. 21s. net.

It is significant, and satisfactory, that there is no English word for *festschrift*. Save in its expression of affection for the recipient, the album of unrelated essays is frequently an unsatisfying volume; but, in the words of the Preface to this book, 'it is right to offer to David Nichol Smith a book of essays on the eighteenth century', and the editors have certainly fulfilled their aim of helping the reader to know more about the century than he did before.

The reader should be grateful, for instance, to Mr. Hugh Macdonald for his account of John Langhorne, about whom most of us know that he translated Plutarch, and nothing more. Mr. Macdonald gives us an admirably proportioned picture of Langhorne both as author and critic. Similarly Mr. Blunden writes of Vicesimus Knox the anthologist, an aspect of the man ignored by Boswell; Professor Renwick introduces us to the lesser poets of the period, whose attraction, as he rightly remarks, is not merely antiquarian.

As for the major writers, it is claimed by the publishers that 'the greater men such as Addison, Swift, Pope, Johnson and Burns are fully treated'. It might be difficult to substantiate this claim so far as Johnson is concerned. Dr. Chapman contributes an informing and entertaining footnote to his eagerly awaited edition of the Letters and examines in detail Johnson's method of epistolary address and conclusion. In particular, he notes that the formal opening may mean nothing: 'He may begin "Dear Sir" and end "I am, my dearest Boswell, Yours most affectionately"'. But this is the only essay specifically devoted to Johnson. His prose style and his standards of criticism are treated in other essays, but on his poetry the contributors are silent. Perhaps they felt that it was not for them to bandy subtleties with the editor of the *Poems of Samuel Johnson*. On Boswell, on the other hand, there is an essay of great interest by Professor Pottle, who compares the power of memory as displayed by Boswell and by Scott. No one could be so well equipped to write on such a topic as the editor of the Isham papers, and his comparison of Boswell's journal with Scott's is fascinating. Their perceptions were similar, but the uses made of them were quite different: 'Boswell had to consult verbal clues and was unable or unwilling to reconstruct the past unless he was properly buttressed and limited by circumstance. . . . For verbal material Scott demanded no clues, but confidently constructed it out of his head as he wanted it'.

To go back to the beginning, Mr. C. S. Lewis treats Addison in a manner

reminiscent of Professor Dobree's essay of twenty years ago: 'Almost everything which my own generation ignorantly called Victorian seems to have been expressed by Addison. Everything the moderns detest, all that they call *smugness*, *complacency* and *bourgeois ideology* is brought together in his work'. Is this not a little hard on Addison? The charge of smugness and complacency would surely be levelled by 'the moderns' at many an eighteenth-century author (the Good Lord Lyttelton, for instance), for it is a charge against the whole Whig tradition in its social aspect. Addison, of course, stands out prominently in this tradition, but he offers something more than 'a cure for the fidgets'. It was Johnson, after all, who said that Addison was 'never feeble'. Addison's 'middle style' is further discussed by Professor Sutherland, who contrasts the oracular quality of Johnson's prose with the care-free play of mind as shown, for instance, in Gray's letters; he quotes a writer in the *Monthly Review* of 1793 who states that it was Johnson and Gibbon who were the masters of the closely condensed and highly ornamented diction which shrank from familiar and idiomatic phraseology. What is Johnsonese? asks Professor Sutherland in effect. Are *The Lives of the Poets*, is the *Preface* to Shakespeare written in Johnsonese? Are the letters to Mrs. Thrale containing the small beer of Lichfield gossip different, in essence, from Gray's letters from Cambridge to Horace Walpole? And what of the lighter *Idler* papers? Is it not clear that the tradition of Johnsonese rests largely upon *The Rambler*, the work of the great moralist, the lay-preacher who instinctively eschewed 'colloquial inelegance'? As for Edward Harwood, Johnson dismissed him with a single and satisfying epithet. 'Puppy' he said, when, for 'Jesus wept' he read 'The Saviour of the World burst into a flood of tears'. *Corruptio optimi pessima*. Yet, when the Vicar of Wakefield describes how he and his family 'all bent in gratitude to that Being who gave us another day', no jarring note is struck. It was the Vicar's natural idiomatic English.

On Swift there are two essays: Professor Herbert Davis writes with appropriate clarity on Swift's conciseness, and Mr. Harold Williams, out of the abundance of his learning, compares Hawkesworth and Deane Swift as editors, much to the advantage of the latter, and this 'brings comfort, for we are dependent upon Deane Swift for nearly three-quarters of *The Journal to Stella*'.

Professor George Sherburn introduces us, through the medium of the Spence papers and other MSS., to Pope's workshop and shows that even a couplet like

Know then thyself; presume not God to scan;  
The proper study of mankind is man—

was not made perfect without the *limæ labor*. Mr. John Butt, in discussing Pope's sources of inspiration (fancy, morality, and books), wisely remarks that the reading of a book can be an emotional experience as much as the sight of a field of daffodils.

Such are some samples of the work with which the friends of David Nichol Smith have delighted to honour him. About the portrait which serves as frontispiece to the book it is less easy to be enthusiastic. The sternness of Caledonia is there, but where is the benignity of the Merton Professor?

S. C. ROBERTS.



**Tracts and Pamphlets by Richard Steele.** Edited by RAE BLANCHARD. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press; London: Oxford University Press, 1944. Pp. xviii+633. \$5.50; 33s. 6d. net.

In order to be studied authors must be read; but it is an unfortunate truth that many of the works of important English writers are not easily accessible, because they have not been reprinted in recent times. This edition fills a gap and makes it possible to study Steele's writings as a whole without a visit to the British Museum. The task Miss Blanchard set herself was to collect 'every tract and short piece of writing in pamphlet form known certainly to be Steele's'. In point of fact, she has also reprinted a few works that can only be ascribed to Steele with some degree of probability. But her decision to include these was wise. Moreover, she points out that further research may show that Steele wrote other pamphlets whose authorship is as yet undetermined. Should this happen, her edition will be proved incomplete. That, however, cannot be helped; those who have profited by Miss Blanchard's work will be the last to blame her because further discoveries about Steele are made.

Miss Blanchard's principle in constituting her text has been to follow 'the edition or issue which represents Steele's final word'; variant readings, when significant, are given in an appendix. This principle is sound. What is not so satisfactory is Miss Blanchard's method of dealing with certain works that were written in part by Steele and in part by others. What she does is to reprint the portions that she thinks were written by Steele and to omit the rest. The result is curious and perplexing. For instance, it is quite impossible to form any adequate opinion of the nature and purport of *The Romish Ecclesiastical History of Late Years* after reading those portions that are reprinted in this edition; Steele's share in the work cannot be estimated apart from its context.

Miss Blanchard does not provide explanatory notes, but in the introductions prefixed to the several pamphlets she deals with the circumstances that called them forth and 'the obvious questions of date, authorship, and interpretation'. Unhappily, these introductions often fail to give the reader information which he might reasonably expect to find. What is said about the authorship of *An Account of the State of the Roman Catholic Religion* is rather confused, and the absence of precise references makes it difficult to investigate the statements about Hoadley's share in the tract. Nor does Miss Blanchard do much to elucidate the rather complicated history of the period. When explanation is most needed, she fails to give it. The ordinary reader will want to know more about the question of Dunkirk than she tells him and will be baffled by Steele's allusions to an interesting legal point in the *Letter . . . concerning the Condemned Lords*, allusions to which Miss Blanchard refers in her introduction, without, however, explaining them.

These defects should not make those who use her edition forget how much they owe to Miss Blanchard. She has benefited both students of literature and students of history. The reviewer, who belongs to the latter category, has been induced by the perusal of this volume to ask himself how Steele compares with his contemporary pamphleteers. Steele was more concerned with principles and less with personalities than many of his fellows. The absence of any element of scurrility in his writings is rather striking. But his decency has as its concomitant a certain lack of vigour. Steele's reputation should not be allowed to obscure the fact that his polemical writings are not of outstanding merit. Why, then, it



may be asked, did they attract so much attention? The answer would seem to be that Steele had already made his name as a man of letters before he began to write on politics; when, moreover, he turned to political topics, he adopted a tone that was calculated to appeal to the more sober-minded of his contemporaries. But Steele's influence as a pamphleteer is a subject that might well repay further investigation.

MARK A. THOMSON.

**Two Centuries of Johnsonian Scholarship.** Being the twelfth Lecture on the David Murray Foundation in the University of Glasgow delivered on May 3rd, 1945. By R. W. CHAPMAN. Glasgow: Jackson, Son and Company for the University, 1945. Pp. 35. 2s. net.

Dr. Chapman has taken for the subject of his David Murray lecture a survey of Johnsonian research from the time of Boswell and his contemporaries until the present day, and has treated the subject with his customary precision and grace. About one-third of the lecture is devoted to Boswell's work. Dr. Chapman reminds us that Boswell's conception of a good Johnsonian was not limited to stimulating the great man to talk and preserving a record of his conversation, nor to searching books, records, and the recesses of Johnson's and other men's memories for biographical data, but also involved labours on the Johnsonian canon, a task for which Boswell was not very well equipped. Though he had industry and pertinacity, 'he was no more than a fair scholar and critic', says Dr. Chapman, 'and his knowledge of the miscellaneous literature between 1738 . . . and 1762 was superficial. Boswell had a good deal of Latin and a smattering of Greek. But he could not follow his master into the darker places of antiquity. Still less could he follow him in the literature of the continental renaissance'. Such labours as these are nevertheless but a small part of our debt to Boswell, and Dr. Chapman is at greater pains to emphasize those qualities of Boswell's mind and personality—the width of his interests and sympathies, . . . the intensity of his passion for record, his longing to live a full life and at the same time to catch it on the wing and pin it to paper . . . his inexhaustible good humour . . . and his gift for forgetting himself in his love for others'—which make *The Life of Johnson* the first of biographies.

There is a neat but necessarily brief account of Boswell's diaries and the making of the *Life*, a justification of Croker's bold experiment, a wish expressed for 'a *Clavis Johnsoniana*, a skeleton chart of his life, in which for every year, for every month, often for every day, would be indicated what was done or said or written, with reference to the works in which the *acta, dicta, scripta* may be found', a summary statement of later labours in editing Boswell's *Life* (we are glad to learn that the Hill-Powell *Tour* is already in print and the index volume far advanced) and Johnson's writings, and in the genealogical and bibliographical fields.

And lastly, an important section of the lecture is devoted to the value of conjectural emendation in textual criticisms. Readers both of Johnson and of Trollope know how happily Dr. Chapman has practised this art, and will relish his conclusions—that in modern texts, 'the glaring error is almost sure to be corrected; that is, in proof. It is the plausible error . . . that escapes the author's attention. . . . In emending modern texts the difficulty is not so much to make the necessary correction as to divine that the text is at fault'; and finally: 'If we

are to produce elaborate editions of these authors, . . . I think it not creditable to our scholarship that it should acquiesce in texts which give us, not very seldom, what is either nonsense or a sense not intended by the author. Conjectural criticism is not of the first importance; but neither is it negligible.'

JOHN BUTT.

**Essence and Attitude in English Romanticism.** By S. B. LILJEGREN. Lund: Almqvist and Wiksells Boktryckeri-A.-B. Leipzig: Otto Harrassowitz, 1945. Pp. 253. Kr. 10.

In this rather oddly named study a well-known Swedish scholar has followed up certain lines of inquiry suggested by his monograph on the influence of Richardson on Goethe.<sup>1</sup> The subject of the present work is defined in the introduction as 'the relations between the essence of romanticism and its outward expression'. Beginning with the sentimental novels of Richardson and his followers, and proceeding by way of the *Sorrows of Werther* and the Byronic Hero, he traces most of the external manifestations of nineteenth-century Romanticism to these three influences. A good deal of entertaining detail is met with by the way, particularly the account of precisely why Heine made fun of Werther's blue frock coat and yellow leather trousers, and the convincing demonstration that Bulwer Lytton's *Pelham* had as much to do with the genesis of *Sartor Resartus* as the more frequently cited passage in Swift's *Tale of a Tub*. But it must be said that the volume is not very systematically put together, and throughout we are told a great deal more about 'attitude', i.e. attitudinizing, than about the 'essence' of Romanticism, so that the relation between the two never becomes clear. No serious attempt is made to define this slippery term; we are often, indeed, in some doubt whether we are reading about Romanticism or pseudo-Romanticism. On page 233, it is true, we are told that Carlyle and Thackeray (in the *Yellowplush Papers*) attacked 'the pseudo-Romantic pose' and not 'Romanticism proper'; but much more characteristic of the tone of the book as a whole is a passage, only two pages further on, where it is the Romantic, not the pseudo-Romantic, who, we are assured, 'evidently found himself more interesting than all other existing beings', and whose aim, it appears, 'was always identical: *l'étalage du moi*'. In fact, from *Pamela* down to Oscar Wilde, Mr. Liljegren seems to regard Romanticism as pretty well synonymous with egomania.

Now the pageant of one's bleeding heart is no doubt one important item in the complex exhibition conveniently labelled the Romantic Movement; but it is one item only. Exhibitionism is of course a prominent trait in Byron, Swinburne, and Oscar Wilde; and from the 'twenties to the 'sixties most young poets passed through a Byronic phase—like having the measles. But subjectivism is not exhibitionism; it is the former and not the latter term which is appropriate when we come to consider Wordsworth, Coleridge, Lamb, Hazlitt, Shelley, and Keats—none of whom, strange to say, receives more than a passing mention in this book. Even in Byron the best poetry is surely the least egocentric, or at any rate no more egocentric than a good deal of Milton or Pope, poets whom no one is ever likely to label either Romantic or pseudo-Romantic.

The truth is that 'Romanticism' is something much more complicated than Mr. Liljegren seems conscious of; and it is no more to be explained by its

<sup>1</sup> *The English Sources of Goethe's Gretchen Tragedy: A Study of the Life and Fate of Literary Motives*, 1937.

oddities, extravagances or perversions than Puritanism, Parliamentary Reform or any other great and fruitful movement of the human mind. In discussing literary movements, over-simplification is an error to which, for fairly obvious reasons, Continental scholars seem especially liable. It can never be too often repeated that, in England at any rate, *Werther* and *Childe Harold* were not the progenitors of any really great imaginative literature, and cannot therefore be major factors in working out the problems presented by the Romantic Movement.

R. W. KING.

**Letters of Thomas Hood.** From the Dilke papers in the British Museum. Edited with an Introduction and Notes by LESLIE A. MARCHAND. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press. 1945. Pp. viii+104. \$2.00

In the course of his researches into the editorial labours and friendships of Charles Wentworth Dilke, which bore fruit in a learned and useful volume, *The Athenaeum: a Mirror of Victorian Culture* (1941), Mr. Marchand came across the few letters and fragments by Thomas Hood which are now for the first time printed in this pretty and carefully edited little book. Mr. Marchand wisely does not exaggerate the importance of his find, most of which merely amplifies material already accessible in the *Memorials* compiled by Hood's son and daughter in 1860. No fresh light is thrown on Hood's financial embarrassments and his rather suspiciously frequent disagreements with numerous publishers. But, in sharp contrast to the lively though rather superficial chatter of the journal-letters from Coblenz which fill the greater part of the book, the first letter is a 'psychological document' of some interest. Writing to Dilke in February, 1835, just at the moment when his wife's serious illness had at last taken a turn for the better, Hood pours out at immense length and with almost terrifying frankness his feelings of relief at her recovery, indignation at what he believed to be the selfish callousness of her relatives, and uncertainty regarding his future prospects. It is, of course, not the kind of thing that anyone (least of all a son and daughter) would have dreamed of printing in 1860; but it does no dishonour to the writer, and it shows us an aspect of his character not, so far, satisfactorily revealed by his biographers, though partly discernible in such poems as 'Eugene Aram' and 'The Bridge of Sighs'—those somewhat unexpected contributions to the strain of the grotesque-macabre in early Victorian literature. It is worth noting, also, that the same letter quotes a scrap from an otherwise apparently lost letter from Charles Lamb to Hood, dating probably from the final phase at Edmonton. It includes these characteristic sentences describing his and Mary's loneliness after the departure of some visitors: 'We are quiet as death, & lonely as his dark chambers. But parting wears off as we shall wear off—the great remedy is to be as merry as we can, & the great secret is how to be so.'

R. W. KING.

**Prophets of Heaven and Hell. Virgil, Dante, Milton, Goethe.** An Introductory Essay. By CHARLES RODEN BUXTON. Cambridge: At the University Press, 1945. Pp. xvi+115. 6s. net.

This volume is the condensed result of a life-time's leisure devoted to the study of four great poems. The author, who did not live to write the much fuller work on the same subject which he had in mind, was well qualified, both by experience and by natural endowment, to contribute to the understanding and appreciation of these poems, not only for their æsthetic attractions, but as treasures of 'sage

and serious doctrine', relevant to the problems of all ages, including the present.

He has avoided the dangers of disconnexion and inconclusiveness attending a brief discussion of four major classics, widely separated in time and highly various in character, by concentrating upon their larger significances and by directing attention rather to their common features than to their *differentia*, although these are not neglected. At the outset he faces three main questions: what inherent virtues are perceivable in those works which are not equally displayed elsewhere; what light the works throw upon the course of civilization; and what importance they have for the present times.

Each poem, it is found, 'presents in a single picture, a view of the universe as a whole'; each is imbued with the 'prophetic' spirit, in the sense that the poet was more than a 'pure artist', being earnest in his ethical concerns and aware of some power outside himself of which he was the mouthpiece; and each conveys a 'prophecy' in the guise of a myth. In this context there is a pregnant enquiry into the nature of myth-making, which, it is suggested, can be seen as having not only a useful popularizing function but a validity of its own, a fullness of utterance and effectiveness to which rational formulation cannot attain. There are, further, some helpful pages on the characteristics of the particular myths adopted by the four poets in question,—the choice of a central figure with human proclivities and failings and yet also with some sort of felt relation to a transcendent world; the employment of traditional material; the adaptability of the story to general reflections on the human condition; and its power to stimulate the imagination. The question of belief naturally arises here, and is treated with due respect for its subtlety and for the *nuances* of attitude in the four poets, who nevertheless were at one in a habit of 'likening spiritual to corporal forms' and thus in a willingness to admit the supernatural.

There is freshness again in the chapter on 'historical value', in that the four poets are regarded not merely as reflecting and summing up the thought of their times, but as seeing beyond it and grasping its permanent implications, so that in after ages their works can themselves be recognized as major historical events.

The two final chapters, completed from her husband's notes by Mrs. Buxton, are devoted respectively to 'the moral and intellectual effect of the poems' and to their bearing upon 'the basic ideas of Western civilization'. The poems are a criticism of life, not merely as their writers knew it but as it is lived and interpreted to-day. They offer a view which is broadly humanistic, implying as they do the goodness and desirability of life, the freedom of the will, the responsibility of the individual, and the existence of a spiritual world whose laws are the test of human action. If 'la trahison des clercs' is to be expiated in a renewal of respect for M. Benda's 'religion of Disinterestedness', there may well be a rise in prestige for these earlier exponents.

It may be regretted that no more than five pages are given specifically to 'the poems as works of art' and those pages mainly restricted to the subject of design. Yet more on this aspect might have weakened the effect of a book which is rather intended to show once more the importance of a sane philosophy, and an underlying zeal (not to say purpose), in the making of great poetry, a thesis here maintained without fumbling, facility or flatness. The tone, and some of the material, would suggest that a wider circle is addressed than that of learned readers, but the book is none the worse for that, especially as learned readers can be reminded by it of certain things they are apt to forget or to take too easily for granted.

L. C. MARTIN.



**The Life of George S. Gordon 1881-1942.** By M. C. G. With an Introduction by Lord Halifax. London, New York, and Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1945. Pp. xii+171. 10s. 6d. net.

In this well-written and gracious book, fragrant with tender loyalty and engaging humour and shot through with a deeply felt and fully justified pride, Mrs. Gordon has described the life of her husband, the late President of Magdalen. The little work serves as a commentary on *The Letters of George S. Gordon 1902-1942*, which Mrs. Gordon edited in 1943 and which the writer reviewed in *R.E.S.* in November 1944.

Attractive as the book is in itself, it does not add greatly to our knowledge of the facts of Gordon's life, nor does it paint in more decisively the background of the self-portrait that emerged from his own letters. We know something more of his adventures in Paris with Lord Normand during the year 1906-07, when his researches were so greatly impeded by the ineptitude of the Foreign Office and the British Embassy, of his experiences at Leeds University, and of his relationships with his brother officers during the war of 1914-18. Thanks to a contribution by Mr. Edmund Blunden we see Gordon in action at the Book Society, and thanks to another by Canon Fox we have a pleasant view of the President's active share in the choice of choristers for Magdalen. Indeed Mrs. Gordon has made a happy selection of coadjutors to fill out her own work. Lord Normand contributes a clean-cut account of Gordon's physical appearance and, in another section, of his attitude to life and literature: 'Life did not present itself to him as a problem but as a drama.' Mr. Steuart Miller gives various recollections and appreciations of his old Glasgow and Oxford friend and collaborator, which are models of delicate insight; and Mrs. Gordon, with sure artistry, draws the concluding quotation, not from either of these old friends, but from a business man and brother officer, Captain E. C. Gregory, who had known his comrade in circumstances where manly character is most highly tried. It is fitting that a soldier should have the last word on one whose manliness, like *Cœur de Lion's* kingliness, 'could not be hid'.

Two of Gordon's speeches, given at some length, are admirable examples of his style and point of view, one to the Leeds O.T.C. in 1920, when he dealt faithfully with pacifists and embusqués (pp. 68-69), and one in 1930 to the Oxford Caledonian Club (pp. 103-106) which is a perfect example of the way in which to address young men on a festive evening.

When Robert Bridges lunched at Magdalen to discuss the business of the Society for Pure English he insisted upon an unvarying meal of 'chicken, apple tart, and cheese with claret. Later, when he was losing strength, he suggested champagne!' It was Rudyard Kipling who recommended the south of Spain as a health resort when Gordon was ill (presumably in 1937, but Mrs. Gordon does not set out dates clearly on p. 119). Mr. John Galsworthy's attitude to Germany is tersely glanced at in the speech to Leeds University O.T.C. A conversation between Mr. Hilaire Belloc and Sir Walter Raleigh is charmingly reported:

BELLOC: 'Here am I, scribble, scribble, scribble: and it takes a devil of a lot of scribbling to make £2,000 a year.'

RALEIGH: 'But need you make £2,000 a year?'

BELLOC: 'My dear fellow, I live at the rate of £2,000 a year. Would you have me run into debt?'

The real point of the story (on p. 18) of the A. E. Housman poem is not brought



out. Surely the core of the matter is that the poem was an *unpublished* one? Otherwise there would have been no merit in Gordon's tentative ascription of it to Housman. As the writer remembers the matter (at second hand), Phillimore was examining for a Scholarship in which an element was Latin Verse Composition. One of the examiners produced from his pocket an unpublished poem sent to him by Housman, and suggested it should be set. Such was the eminence of this examiner that the others did not protest—though in Phillimore's view the poem was wholly unsuitable for this purpose. 'None did it very well and most did it very badly.' Unless there were two Housman poems set at two different competitions this is probably the poem whose authorship Gordon was asked to identify.

To those of us who admired both men nothing in Mrs. Gordon's book can give greater satisfaction than the assurance that Gordon completed and polished his account of Phillimore and that it will be published, a fitting memorial to two friends who were lovely and pleasant in their lives.

W. R. CUNNINGHAM.

**Transactions of the Bibliographical Society. The Library.** Fourth Series. Vol. xxvi, No. 1. June 1945. London: Oxford University Press for the Society. Pp. 97.

This number of *The Library* is dedicated to Dr. W. W. Greg by the Council and members of the Bibliographical Society on the occasion of his seventieth birthday. The particular tributes contained in the number are offered by scholars on both sides of the Atlantic. The general tribute which is represented by these offerings and this dedication has long been paid daily by the whole world of English scholarship, though Dr. Greg has been most closely associated with the Bibliographical Society, which therefore has especial rights to act as spokesman in this matter.

The 'List of Dr. Greg's Writings', contributed by Mr. Francis, editor of *The Library*, is particularly welcome, the more so as it has been compiled with the assistance of Dr. Greg and is doubly authoritative therefore. I could for my part wish that my own Malone Society edition of *Believe as you List* had not been eliminated, for, as Mr. Francis rightly says, Dr. Greg's cooperation with his editors amounted to collaboration. But no man ever sought credit less, or gained it more.

Dr. Greg's record of work done must indeed be a record. It stretches over a full half-century, and it covers enormous ground. His writing began in 1896, as the List informs us, with a piece of verse and an article upon mountaineering. But the following year brought him to what has become his principal field of authority, though he moved freely in every other man's manor, and was a competent reviewer of Saintsbury's *History of Criticism* when it appeared or (anonymously) even of an Italian study of economic principles.

One is apt to think too much in terms of Dr. Greg's more heroic labours, the Malone Society series, the *Dramatic Documents from the Elizabethan Playhouses*, *English Literary Autographs*, *A Bibliography of the English Printed Drama*, *Records of the Court of the Stationers' Company*. There are comparatively minor works which are no less indispensable, among them for example his classic British Academy address on *Principles of Emendation in Shakespeare*, or his decisive study of *Two Elizabethan Stage Abridgements*. And a review could with Dr. Greg be the

equivalent of a book, as with his *R.E.S.* review of *The Elizabethan Stage* or his *M.L.R.* reviews of the *New Cambridge Shakespeare*.

I have never seen any copy prepared for press of Dr. Greg's writings other than in the form of a manuscript written in his own impeccable and legible hand, and this is his general practice. It is an image of his independent nature and mind, hating contamination, inaccuracy, and pretentiousness. And no editor has suffered less from after-thoughts than the fortunate editor to whom his contributions came, or the compositor who deals with his copy. He is craftsman no less than scholar.

It is no light venture to contribute matter for a public acknowledgement of Dr. Greg's place in the minds and hearts of his fellow-scholars. But these contributions justify themselves; they are of notable interest; and they link themselves up with the main trends of Dr. Greg's work.

Professor Dover Wilson contributes a characteristic essay on Shakespeare's *Henry the Fourth*, in which he gives a provisional statement of his findings, to be developed in his forthcoming edition of the play and in further work to follow. I find difficulty in agreeing that the *Famous Victories* is closer to Holinshed than *Henry V*, and the instance quoted seems to me to point in the opposite direction (p. 3). Shakespeare's omission of Exeter's reply to Westmoreland is very comprehensible. I should hesitate also to lay much stress on Daniel's 'young Hotspur' as determining the youth of Shakespeare's Hotspur. It was entirely natural to make Hotspur the coeval, as also the opposite, of Prince Hal, and it was dramatically inevitable. Holinshed's Hotspur is 'a captain of high courage', and his age is left open. But his uncle Worcester is governor to the Prince, and the two generations easily run parallel to the imagination. Warner writes of 'Hotspur Harry', and the later chroniclers think of Hotspur as young. Holland's *Camden* has 'the young Hotspur' at Shrewsbury, and so has Howes. The tradition was perhaps old and established before Daniel. But fascinating problems are opened up, and Professor Wilson's invariably wide reading and freshness of mind are brought helpfully to bear upon them.

Professor Quincy Adams introduces us to a new dramatic document in the Folger Library, which is also a new type of document, a seventeenth-century 'author-plot'. The nearest parallel, I suppose, is the inserted 'scenario' leaf in the manuscript of *The Faithful Friends*. Dr. James McManaway also deals with a Folger possession, a quarto of *Blurt Master Constable* with four pages supplied in a contemporary hand which he identifies with the hand of *Dick of Devonshire* in Egerton 1994. He also considers the evidence of Latin mottoes on title-pages, and concludes against Heywood's authorship of *Dick of Devonshire*, inclining rather to Davenport for both plays. Professor R. C. Bald, considering the probabilities of author's 'foul papers' coming to the printer of a play, offers strong evidence in favour of *Your Five Gallants* and *The Knaves in Graine* as instances of this procedure, from a close examination of the quartos of these plays. Professor F. P. Wilson deals with 'English Proverbs and Dictionaries of Proverbs', with most instructive examples of the application of knowledge in these matters to literary criticism, for example to the proper understanding of Shakespeare, and with judicious observations upon the lexicography of proverbs. It is to be observed that the use of proverbs in daily conversation in the sixteenth and seventeenth century was so deeply ingrained in the English that a collection might be made from depositions in courts of law.

The printing is what one might expect from the Bibliographical Society and

the Oxford University Press. There are good reproductions to illustrate the new documents discussed. Only one misprint seems to have eluded Mr. Francis' vigilance, 'Ciutio' under 1900 in the 'List of Writings' for 'Cintio'.

C. J. SISSON.

**From these Roots. The Ideas that have made Modern Literature.** By MARY M. COLUM. New York: Columbia University Press, 1944; London: Oxford University Press, 1945. Pp. xiv + 386. \$3.25; 16s. 6d. net.

Is it pedantic at this date to cavil at the term 'idea-maker'? Those who think so will agree with Mrs. Colum that 'literary criticism . . . represents, in the work of its highest practitioners, that branch of literature whose most important office is the originating of ideas, the discovery of the circumstances, the foreseeing of the lines that other branches of literature follow'. For her the great idea-makers (to each pair a philosopher-critic and a poet-critic) are Lessing and Herder, Coleridge and Wordsworth, Taine and Sainte-Beuve. These have shaped, by their critical writings, the course of modern literature. Her thesis granted, it is not surprising that Mrs. Colum gets irritated with the literature of our own day, which she regards as having fallen into a rut (she was writing of the '30's, but a preface dated 1944 does not indicate that she has changed her views) owing to the dearth of first-class criticism, and that she is rather less than fair to the work of such critics as Eliot and Livingstone Lowes.

There is, however, the other view, that ideas are not made but exist, and that, far from originating new ones, it is the business of the critic to perceive and make plain the essential in what has already been written, as Sainte-Beuve did for *Madame Bovary*. This, for Mrs. Colum, is the secondary function of criticism. But when she writes, 'One of the curious influences . . . was the conclusion by Sainte-Beuve's contemporaries . . . [that] a writer might deliberately live the sort of life that might be supposed to be inspiring for his writing', she seems unaware that the point had already been put categorically by Milton, that the 'strong impulse towards bringing into literature a larger variety of human experience. . . which she attributes chiefly to Lessing and Herder was also the impulse of the renaissance Humanists, and finally that it was the 'idea-making' of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that led to the stagnation of neo-classicism. In the case of a Wordsworth it is a question as to which came first, the hen or the egg: one either believes that a great writer conceives his work first and then invents reasons to justify it, or one does not; and the writer's own pronouncements on the subject are of little help. To my mind Mrs. Colum overstresses the influence of the Germans on Wordsworth and Coleridge (she does not mention Hartley); and when she says of Wordsworth's critical views (which are applicable in anything like a full sense to Wordsworth's poetry alone) that they have 'influenced nearly all poetry written since in Western countries' she is surely misleading. One has only to think of the so-called English Romantic school, of which Wordsworth is supposed to be the founder, to see that it is not so.

The value of Mrs. Colum's work lies in the balanced perspective it gives of the critical theories of the nineteenth century. Her greatest enthusiasm perhaps is for Lessing, but she writes best on Sainte-Beuve and Taine. She points out that the 'naturalist' method of Sainte-Beuve explains fully only the second-rate writer: in her section on Taine it becomes clear that the 'objective correlative' of Eliot is a restatement of the 'petits faits sensibles' of that writer. Above all her sketch of American literature will be illuminating to British readers. One does

not have to accept her underlying thesis to agree with her views on the desirability of a revolution in the methods of writing literary history. *From These Roots*<sup>1</sup> is a useful step towards such a revolution.

NORMAN CALLAN.

**New Bearings in Aesthetics and Art Criticism.** By BERNARD C. HEYL. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1943; London: Oxford University Press, 1944. Pp. xii+172. \$2.50; 16s. 6d. net.

This stimulating little book is designed to throw light on some of the most important muddles in contemporary aesthetics and art criticism, and suggest ways out of the confusion.

It consists of two parts. Part I deals with linguistic confusions as a source of the present chaos. The general theory of meaning is first considered, and the author's conclusions then applied to the terms 'beauty' and 'art'. He contends that one of the chief causes of confusion is the failure to realize the validity of multiple meanings of these terms, and the attempt to prescribe one 'proper' use of each, defined by a 'real definition' purporting to reveal the 'true and only nature' of 'art' or 'beauty'. Some of the chief offenders, in his opinion, are Croce, Collingwood, and Stace. 'Volitional definitions', however, he considers prime aids to discussion. These are attempts to elucidate one's use of a term on any particular occasion, without claiming its exclusive correctness. Besides 'real definitions', verbal exaggeration and vague usage are condemned as confusing.

The use of the word 'truth' in aesthetics is next considered, the author contending that the term is used far too much. He analyses five of its uses: (1) as an undefined term; (2) as 'scientific truth'; (3) as 'artistic sincerity'; (4) as 'artistic consistency'; (5) as 'artistic insight', and maintains that the use of the term in any of these ways is best excluded from aesthetics. In this section he also explains the notion of 'artistic significance', and its importance in the criticism of art.

Part II deals with the theoretical basis of value-judgments. Three theories are reviewed: (1) 'Objectivism', which maintains that artistic value is independent of human valuation. This view is elaborately attacked, and rejected: (2) 'Subjectivism', the view that all critical standards are equally valid. This is also rejected, mainly because it contradicts the evident objective validity which some critical judgments and standards have: (3) 'Relativism', the view that artistic value depends on human valuation, but that this will be sound or unsound according to the worth of the critic, and furthermore will vary as between equally excellent critics or cultures, according to their attitudes and pre-occupations. This is the author's own view.

The treatment of the problems is in places frankly simplified. The book contains, however, much pertinent quotation and many apt concrete examples, although these would in some cases, I think, have been improved by pictorial reproductions. Certain passages in the book appear open to objection on points of detail; but the broad outline is well maintained. The author acknowledges his deep debt to the work of Dr. I. A. Richards, but he is obviously also *au fait* with a great variety of modern work on his subject. The book would be a wholesome student's introduction to some of the chief problems of aesthetics, and should also prove stimulating to the more advanced reader.

THEODORE REDPATH.

<sup>1</sup> Originally published 1937 (Scribner's).



**American Literature in Nineteenth-Century England.** By CLARENCE GOHDES. New York: Columbia University Press, 1944; London: Oxford University Press, 1945. Pp. xii+191. \$2.50; 16s. 6d. net.

Professor Gohdes' theme is the invasion of nineteenth-century England by American literature; his aim is to answer the old question 'Who reads an American book?' He has produced an admirable and important study.

If Sydney Smith had asked his question later in the century he would have had to be told that practically everyone read American books. Professor Gohdes shows us how this came about, and in so doing makes his most original contribution to our knowledge of his subject, and a most interesting one; it is on this, the subject of his second chapter, that I shall concentrate, as there is no space for the extended review that this book deserves.

Two conditions prepared the way for the flood of American reprints that appeared on the English market from about the middle of the century onwards. The market for cheap books was always expanding, as it kept pace with the continuous extension of the reading public—owing to the spread of literacy, education, and the desire for 'self improvement'. The easiest way for the publisher to provide cheap books, the copyright situation being what it was, was to pirate American texts that he thought would be popular. (Not that all reprints were piracies; in many cases, particularly later in the century, payments were made to the authors.) For these reasons, and because the American books turned out to be so popular once they were known, American reprints appear so often in publishers' lists, particularly in the 'libraries' or series so favoured by the Victorian publisher. Some of Professor Gohdes' conclusions are so surprising that they must be given in detail: during the last twenty years of the century British publishing houses brought out at least thirty-five editions or issues of one or more volumes by Poe, twenty by Whitman, nine by Melville, twenty by Thoreau, fifty by Lowell, sixty by Irving, fifty by Cooper, seventy by Holmes, ninety by Hawthorne, twenty-five by Emerson, fifteen by Bryant, twenty-five by Whittier, forty-five by Howells, and sixty by Mark Twain. And one must take into account the popularity, at another level, of such things as that tear-stained story *The Wide Wide World*—which I myself read as a small boy in a nineteenth-century edition. All this suggests many questions. One wishes, for example, that Professor Gohdes had allowed himself more space than he does, in his last chapter, to discuss the reasons for the immense vogue enjoyed by American writers here among all sorts of readers; the suggestions he does offer are, however, excellent.

After discussing the reception of American periodicals Professor Gohdes passes to a stranger and more fascinating story: the story of the conquest of England by American humour and its purveyors. Then, narrowing his scope from the group to the individual, he chooses to study Longfellow's English reputation. If a choice had to be made, this choice was, unfortunately, right, though the account of this poet's immense popularity here makes depressing reading. Professor Gohdes sums up by saying 'this American was the unofficial Laureate of Victorian England'; and in 1850 Charles Eliot Norton had already written: 'Tennyson, it is said, is to be Poet Laureate, simply because there is no great poet in England to take the place. . . . Everybody here says there is no poet in England to be compared with Mr. Longfellow.' The final chapter is about the views of English critics on American literature; it ends with some suggestions about the influence that may have been exerted here by those



American books which interested our grandfathers more deeply than we had realized.

There is a comprehensive bibliography of 'Representative articles on American Literature appearing in British periodicals, 1833 to 1901'.

Professor Gohdes says that the vastness of his subject has deterred him from attempting to cover more ground. We can sympathize; but what we have been given is so good that we must wish that we had been given more.

D. J. GORDON.

### SHORT NOTICES

**The English Strong Verb from Chaucer to Caxton.** By MARY McDONALD LONG. Menasha, Wisconsin: George Banta Publishing Company. 1944. Pp. xvi+314.

Anyone seeking information about the development of any part of the strong verb in the fifteenth century will find Dr. Long's book useful for reference. Herein is a collection of over 15,000 verb forms, taken from all dialects except Kent, from some forty texts, which represent colloquial, official, and literary English between 1400 and 1475.

The first seven chapters are each devoted to one of the seven recognized classes of strong verbs in Old English, and are set out on the same plan, an arrangement necessitating much repetition, but obviating the need for cross-references. Each chapter begins with a list of specimen verbs belonging to the class under discussion. Then comes a complete conjugation of a typical verb based on Chaucerian forms, with parallels of reconstructed mid fifteenth-century Southumbrian and Northern paradigms. Changes in the ablaut pattern from the Old English period are noted. The specimen verbs from the initial list are then treated in turn. After the principal parts of each, as found in Old English, Chaucer, and Malory, there follow all variations in all the different parts of the conjugation found in the forty texts examined, with comments upon such irregularities as are due to analogy with other dialectal forms, with strong verbs of other classes, and with weak verbs. Compound verbs are dealt with immediately after their simple forms.

A short chapter of six and a half pages, which one wishes longer, summarizes the general characteristics and trends in the development of the strong verb under the headings of *Orthography, Phonology, Analogy, Morphology*. This detailed and painstaking book contains still further records of laborious investigations. In the Appendices are statistical tables of variations, not only for all the classes, but also for all the specimen verbs of the different classes. In addition, the paradigms of preterite-present and anomalous verbs are given, with all the variations from the forty texts. The mass of accumulated detail in this book makes it quite unreadable from cover to cover, but a full index of all the verbs quoted will lead the seeker easily to the information he requires. PHYLLIS HODGSON.

**John Gibson Lockhart.** Commemoration Address delivered in the University of Glasgow 18 June, 1930, by GEORGE STUART GORDON. Glasgow: Jackson, Son & Company. 1944. Pp. 20. 1s. 3d. net.

In these twenty odd pages Professor Gordon has contrived to give us not a mere glimpse but a comprehensive portrait of John Gibson Lockhart as a distinguished scholar, a witty and satirical young man writing for *Blackwood's Magazine*, the editor of the *Quarterly* for twenty-seven years, and Scott's devoted son-in-law and biographer.

He reminds us that he was the author of four novels, some spirited verse and some astute criticism of Wordsworth and Coleridge, showing himself to be far ahead of his day in seeing the true merit of their work.

But it was as a biographer that Lockhart excelled. In recording the life of Scott he was writing of one whom he knew intimately and for whom he had a strong affection. Nevertheless, his work is characterized throughout by temperate judgment and clear thinking and his hero is not eulogized unduly nor are his faults and foibles minimized. Lockhart handles his vast material in a masterly way, with the result, as Professor Gordon points out, that he 'shows you his man, not only from infancy to age, . . . but from getting up to lying down: from five in the morning, when Scott rose and lit his fire, to ten in the evening, when he ended his day with a whisky toddy in the family circle'. It is, in a word, Scott's humanity which Lockhart is at most pains to stress, and therein lies the magic of his art.

M. C. HILDYARD.

## SUMMARY OF PERIODICAL LITERATURE

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- DURHAM UNIVERSITY JOURNAL, Vol. 38, No. 1 (new series, Vol. 7, No. 1),  
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The fool in *King Lear* (John F. Danby), pp. 17-24.
- E.L.H., Vol. 13, No. 1, March 1946—  
The Romantic movement: a selective and critical bibliography for the year  
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An Othello all-too modern (E. E. Stoll), pp. 46-63.  
Reply to Leo Kirschbaum, *E.L.H.*, July 1944.  
The meaning of Keats's 'Eve of St. Mark' (Walter E. Houghton), pp. 64-78.
- ENGLISH STUDIES, Vol. 27, No. 1, February 1946—  
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*Beowulf*, 2611-25; purpose of the digression.  
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- THE LIBRARY CHRONICLE, University of Texas, Vol. 1, No. 4, Fall 1945—  
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Examination of conclusions of *An Enquiry into the Nature of certain nineteenth-century pamphlets*, 1934 (John Carter and Graham Pollard).
- MODERN LANGUAGE NOTES, Vol. 61, No. 2, February 1946—  
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